

But will you marry her to-morrow?
 I will verily.
 I am undone then, said she, let me perish.
 No, you may have a little room in Countess's house, and let me be a countess; you and your wife
 will be sure of the wife's custom.
 And by him I have shew'd!

But we cannot cut our hair;
 By now that the countess's project was cross'd.

Will Come, dear madam, what yet might I possibly
 do in such a match more pardonable before marriage than at
 present; but to-morrow, by the help of the parish,
 you'll put me out of all my fears.
 Count I am afraid then you would give me revenge,
 and make me jealous of you; and I had rather suspect
 your faith than you should mine.

And Countess I think, I had rather suspect your faith
 than you should mine; therefore let us be marry
 to-morrow, that I may have my turn of watching, dog-
 ging, standing under the window, at the door, behind
 the hanging, or —

But if I could be desperate now, and give you
 my liberty, could you find in your heart to quit all
 other engagements, and voluntarily turn your self over
 to one woman, and be a wife too? could you away
 with the insupportable bondage of matrimony?
 And you talk of matrimony as irreversibly as my
 lady Eglamour, and bondage of matrimony! no —

The end of marriage, now is liberty,
 And you are bound — to let each other free.

21 W 12

COMEDY

As it is SETTED at the

THEATRE ROYAL

The S. O. S.

HTDUBLIN:

Printed by A. E. SMITH,
Book-Binder, Book-Seller & Dealer
in Dewey Street, opposite to the
Court House, M DCC XXXIII.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

Mr. Horner,
Mr. Harcourt,
Mr. Dorilant,
Mr. Pinchwife,
Mr. Sparkish,
Sir Jasper Fidget,

Mr. Hart.
Mr. Kenaston.
Mr. Lydal.
Mr. Mobun.
Mr. Haynes.
Mr. Cartwright.

W O M E N.

Mrs. Margery Pinchwife,
Mrs. Alithea,
My Lady Fidget,
Mrs. Dainty Fidget,
Mrs. Squeamish,
Old Lady Squeamish,

Mrs. Bowtel.
Mrs. James.
Mrs. Knep.
Mrs. Corbet.
Mrs. Wyatt.
Mrs. Rutter.

Waiters, Servants, and Attendants.

A Boy.
A Quack.
Lucy, Alithea's Maid,

Mr. Shotterel.
Mrs. Cory.

The S C E N E, London.

T H E

THE COUNTRY WIFE:

ACT I. SCENE I.

Enter Horner, and Quack following him at a distance.

Horner.



Quack is as fit for a pimp, as a midwife for a baud, they are still but in their way, both helpers of nature— (*Aside.*) —well, my dear doctor, hast thou done what I desired?

Quack. I have undone you for ever with the women, and reported you throughout the whole town as bad as an *Eunuch*, with as much trouble as if I had made you one in earnest.

Horn. But have you told all the midwives you know, the orange wenches at the play-houses, the city husbands, and old fumbling keepers of this end of the town? for they'll be the readiest to report it.

Quack. I have told all the chamber-maids, waiting-women, tyre-women, and old women of my acquaintance; nay, and whisper'd it as a secret to'em, and to the whisperers of *Whiteball*; so that you need not doubt 'twill spread, and you will be as odious to the handsome young women, as——

Horn. As the small pox ——well——

Quack. And to the married women of this end of the town, as——

Horn. As the great ones; nay, as their own husbands.

Quack. And to the city dames, as annisced *Robin*, of filthy and contemptible memory; and they will frighten their children with your name, especially their females.

Horn. And cry *Horner's* coming to carry you away. I am only afraid 'twill not be believ'd: you told 'em it was by an *English-French* disaster, and an *English-French* chirurgeon, who has given me at once, not only a cure, but an antidote for the future, against that damn'd malady, and that worse distemper, love, and all other womens evils.

Quack. Your late journey into *France* has made it the more credible, and your being here a fortnight before you appear'd in publick, looks as if you apprehended the shame, which I wonder you do not: well I have been hir'd by young gallants to bely 'em t'other way; but you are the first wou'd be thought a man unfit for women.

Horn. Dear Mr. doctor, let vain rogues be contented only to be thought abler men than they are, generally 'tis all the pleasure they have; but mine lies another way.

Quack. You take, methinks, a very preposterous way to it, and as ridiculous as if we operators in physick, should put forth bills to disparage our medicaments, with hopes to gain customers.

Horn. Doctor, there are quacks in love as well as physick, who get but the fewer and worse patients, for ther boasting; a good name is seldom got by giving it one's self, and women no more than honour are compass'd by bragging: come, come, doctor, the wisest lawyer never discovers the merits of his cause till the tryal; the wealthiest man conceals his riches, and the cunning gamester his play. Shy husbands and keepers, like old rocks, are not to be cheated, but by a new unpractis'd trick: false friendship will now no more than false dice upon 'em; no, not in the city.

Enter Boy.

Boy. There are two ladies and a gentleman coming up.

Horn. A pox, some unbelieving sisters of my former acquaintance, who, I am afraid, expect their sense shou'd be satisfy'd of the falsity of the report. No—— this formal fool and women!

Enter Sir Jasp. Fidg. Lady Fidg. and Mrs. Dainty Fidget.

Quack.

Quack. His wife and sister.

Sir Jasp. My coach breaking just now before your door, sir, I look upon as an occasional reprimand to me, sir, for not kissing your hands, sir, since your coming out of *France*, sir; and so my disaster, sir, has been my good fortune, sir; and this is my wife, and sister, sir.

Horn. What then, sir?

Sir Jasp. My lady, and sister, sir—— Wife, this is master *Horn*.

Lady Fidg. Master *Horn*, husband!

Sir Jasp. My lady, my lady *Fidget*, sir.

Horn. So, sir.

Sir Jasp. Won't you be acquainted with her, sir? (So the report is true, I find by his coldness or aversion for the sex; but I'll play the wag with him.)

[*Aside.*]

Pray salute my wife, my lady, sir.

Horn. I will kiss no man's wife, sir, for him, sir; I have taken my eternal leave, sir, of the sex already, sir.

Sir Jasp. Ha, ha, ha; I'll plague him yet. [*Aside.*]
Not know my wife, sir!

Horn. I do know your wife, sir, she's a woman, sir, and consequently a monster, sir, a greater monster than a husband, sir?

Sir Jasp. A husband! how, sir?

Horn. So, sir; but I make no more cuckolds, sir.

(*Makes horns.*)

Sir Jasp. Ha, ha, ha, *Mercury*, *Mercury*.

Lady Fidg. Pray, sir *Jasper*, let us be gone from this rude fellow.

Mrs. Daint. Who by his breeding, wou'd think he had ever been in *France*?

Lady Fidg. Foh, he's but too much a *French* fellow, such as hate women of quality and virtue, for their love to their husbands, *Sir Jasper*; a woman is hated by 'em as much for loving her husband, as for loving their money. But pray let's be gone.

Horn. You do well, madam; for I have nothing that you came for: I have brought over not so much

as a bawdy picture, new postures, nor the second part of the *École de Filles*; nor——

Quack. Hold, for shame, sir! what d'ye mean? you'll ruin your self for ever with the sex——(*Apart to Horn.*

Sir Jasp. Ha, ha, ha, he hates women perfectly, I find.

Dain. What pity 'tis he shou'd.

Lady Fidg. Ay, he's a base rude fellow for't: but affectation makes not a woman more odious to them than virtue.

Horn. Because your virtue is your greatest affectation, madam.

Lady Fidg. How! you saucy fellow, wou'd you wrong my honour?

Horn. If I cou'd.

Lady Fidg. How d'ye mean, sir?

Sir Jasp. Ha, ha, ha, no, he can't wrong your ladyship's honour, upon my honour: he poor man —— hark you, in your ear,— a mere eunuch.

Lady Fidg. O filthy *French* beast, foh, foh; why do we stay? let's be gone: I can't endure the sight of him.

Sir Jasp. Stay but till the chairs come; they'll be here presently.

Lady Fidg. No, no.

Sir Jasp. Nor can I stay longer: 'tis——let me see, a quarter and half quarter of a minute past eleven. The council will be set; I must away; business must be prefer'd always before love and ceremony, with the wife Mr. *Hornet*.

Horn. And the impotent *Sir Jasper*.

Sir Jasp. Ay, ay, the impotent master *Hornet*, hah, hah, hah.

Lad. Fidg. What, leave us with a filthy man alone in his lodgings?

Sir Jasp. He's an innocent man now, you know: pray stay, I'll hasten the chairs to you——Mr. *Hornet*, your servant, I shou'd be glad to see you at my house. Pray come and dine with me, and play at cards with my wife after dinner: you are fit for women at that game yet, ha, ha——('tis as much a husband's prudence to provide innocent diversion for a wife, as to hinder her un-

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unlawful pleasures ; and he had better employ her,
than let her employ her self)

(*Aside.*

Farewel.

(*Exit* *for Jasper.*

Horn. Your servant, sir *Jasper.*

Lad. Fidge. I will not stay with him, foh——

Horn. Nay, madam, I beseech you stay, if it be but
to see I can be as civil to ladies yet, as they would de-
sire.

Lad. Fidge. No, no, foh, you cannot be civil to la-
dies.

Daint. You as civil as ladies wou'd desire ?

Lad. Fidge. No, no, no, foh, foh, foh.

(*Exeunt Lady Fidget and Dainty.*

Quack. Now, I think, I, or you your self rather, have
done your business with the women.

Horn. Thou art an ass : don't you see already, upon
the report and my carriage, this grave man of business
leaves his wife in my lodgings, invites me to his house
and wife, who before wou'd not be acquainted with me
out of jealousy.

Quack. Nay, by this means you may be the more ac-
quainted with the husbands, but the less with the
wives.

Horn. Let me alone ; if I can but abuse the husbands,
I'll soon disabuse the wives : stay—— I'll reckon you
up the advantages I am like to have by my stratagem :
first, I shall be rid of all my old acquaintances, the
most insatiable sorts of duns, that invade our lodgings
in a morning ; and next to the pleasure of making a
new mistress, is that of being rid of an old one, and of
all old debts : love when it comes to be so, is paid the
most unwillingly.

Quack. Well, you may be so rid of your old acquaint-
ances ; but how will you get any new ones ?

Horn. Doctor, thou wilt never make a good chymist,
thou art so incredulous and impatient. Ask but all
the young fellows of the town, if they do not lose more
time, like huntsmen, in starting the game, than in run-
ning it down : one knows not where to find 'em ; who
will, or will not. Women of quality are so civil, you
can hardly distinguish love from good breeding, and a
man is often mistaken : but now I can be sure, she

that shews an aversion to me, loves the sport, as those women that are gone, whom I warrant to be right. And then the next thing is, your women of honour, as you call 'em, are only chary of their reputations, not their persons; and 'tis scandal they wou'd avoid, not men. Now may I have, by the reputation of an eunuch, the privileges of one, and be seen in a lady's chamber in a morning as early as her husband; kiss virgins before their parents, or lovers; and may be, in short, the *Pars-par-tout* of the town. Now, doctor.

Quack. Nay, now you shall be the doctor; and your process is so new, that we do not know but it may succeed.

Horn. Not so new neither, *probatum est*, doctor.

Quack. Well, I wish you luck, and many patients, whilst I go to mine. (Ex. *Quack.*)

Enter Harcourt and Dorilant to Horner.

Harc. Come, your appearance at the play yesterday, has, I hope, harden'd you for the future against the women's contempt, and the mens raillery: and now you'll abroad as you were wont.

Horn. Did I not bear it bravely?

Dor. With a most theatrical impudence, nay, more than the orange-wenchs shew there, or a drunken vizard-masque, or a great-belly'd actress; nay, or the most impudent of creatures, an ill poet, or what is yet more impudent, a second-hand critick.

Horn. But what say the ladies? have they no pity?

Harc. What ladies? the vizard-masques you know never pity a man when all's gone, tho' in their service.

Dor. And for the women in the boxes, you'd never pity them, when 'twas in your power.

Harc. They say, 'tis pity but all that deal with common women shou'd be serv'd so.

Dor. Nay, I dare swear, they won't admit you to play at cards with them, go to plays with them, or do the little duties which other shadows of men are wont to do for 'em.

Horn. Who do you call shadows of men?

Dor. Half-men.

Horn. What boys?

Dor. Ay, your old boys, old *Beaux Garçons*, who like super-

superannuated stallions are suffer'd to run, feed, and whinny with the mares as long as they live, though they can do nothing else.

Horn. Well, a pox on love and wenching. Women serve but to keep a man from better company : tho' I can't enjoy them, I shall you the more. Good fellowship and friendship are lasting, rational, and manly pleasures.

Harc. For all that, give me some of those pleasures you call effeminate too : they help to relish one another.

Horn. They disturb one another.

Harc. No, mistresses are like books : if you pore upon them too much, they doze you, and make you unfit for company ; but if us'd discreetly, you are the fitter for conversation by 'em.

Dor. A mistress shou'd be like a little country retreat near the town ; not to dwell in constantly, but only for a night, and away, to taste the town the better when a man returns.

Horn. I tell you, 'tis as hard to be a good fellow, a good friend, and a lover of women, as 'tis to be a good fellow, a good friend, and a lover of money. You cannot follow both, then chuse your side : wine gives you liberty, love takes it away.

Dor. Gad, he's in the right on't.

Horn. Wine gives you joy ; love grief and tortures, besides surgeons : wine makes us witty ; love only sots : wine makes us sleep ; love breaks it.

Dor. By the world, he has reason, *Harcourt*.

Horn. Wine makes——

Dor. Ay, wine makes us——makes us princes ; love makes us beggars, poor rogues, ygad—— and wine——

Horn. So, there's one converted— no, no, love and oil, wine and vinegar.

Harc. I grant it : love will still be uppermost.

Horn. Come, for my part, I will have only those glorious manly pleasures of being very drunk, and very slovenly.

Enter Boy.

Boy. Mr. *Sparkish* is below, sir.

Harc. What, my dear friend ! a rogue that is fond of me only, I think, for abusing him.

Dor. No, he can no more think the men laugh at him, than that women jilt him, his opinion of himself is so good.

Horn. Well, there's another pleasure by drinking, I thought not of; I shall lose his Acquaintance, because he cannot drink. And you know 'tis a very hard thing to be rid of him; for he's one of those nauseous offenders at wit, who, like the worst fidlers, run themselves into all companies.

Harc. One that by being in the company of men of sense, wou'd pass for one.

Horn. And may so to the short-sighted world; as a false jewel amongst true ones, is not discerned at a distance: his company is as troublesome to us as a cuckold's, when you have a mind to his wife's.

Harc. No, the rogue will not let us enjoy one another, but ravishes our conversation, tho' he signifies no more to't, than sir *Martin Marall's* gaping, and awkward thrumming upon the lute, does to his man's voice and musick.

Dor. And to pass for a wit in town, shews himself a fool every night to us, that are guilty of the plot.

Horn. Such wits as he, are, to a company of reasonable men, like rooks to the gamesters, who only fill a room at the table, but are so far from contributing to the play, that they only serve to spoil the fancy of those that do.

Dor. Nay, they are us'd like rooks too, snubb'd check'd, and abus'd; yet the rogues will hang on.

Horn. A pox on 'em, and all that force nature, and wou'd be still what she forbids 'em: affectation is her greatest monster.

Harc. Most men are the contraries to that they wou'd seem: your bully, you see is a coward with a long sword; the little humbly fawning physician, with his ebony cane, is he that destroys men.

Dor. The usurer, a poor rogue, possess'd of moldy bonds and mortgages; and we they call spendthrifts, are only wealthy, who lay out his money upon daily new purchases of pleasure.

Horn. Ay, your errantest cheat is your trustee or executor; your jealous man, the greatest cuckold; your churchman,

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churchman, the greatest atheist ; and your noisy pert
rouge of a wit, the greatest fop, dullest ass, and worst
company, as you shall see : for here he comes.

Enter Sparkish to them.

Spark. How is't, sparks ? how is't, well faith, *Harc-*
ry, I must rally thee a little, ha, ha, ha, upon the re-
port in town of thee ; ha ; ha, ha : I cant hold y'faith ;
shall I speak ?

Horn. Yes ; but you'll be so bitter then.

Spark. Honest *Dick* and *Frank* here shall answer for
me ; I will not be extreme bitter, by the universe.

Harc. We will be bound in a ten thousand pound
bond, he shall not be bitter at all.

Dor. Nor sharp, not sweet.

Horn. What, not downright insipid ?

Spark. Nay then, since you are so brisk, and provoke
me, take what follows : you must know I was discour-
sing and rallying with some ladies yesterday, and they
happen'd to talk of the fine new signs in town.

Horn. Very fine ladies, I believe.

Spark. Said I, I know where the best new sign is.
Where ? says one of the ladies. In *Covent-Garden*, I
reply'd. Said another, in what street ? in *Russel-street*,
answered I. Lord, says another, I'm sure there was ne-
ver a fine new sign there yesterday. Yes, but there
was, said I again ; and it came out of *France*, and has
been there a fortnight.

Dor. A pox, I can hear no more, prithee.

Horn. No, hear him out ; let him tune his crowd a
while.

Harc. The worst musick, the greatest preparation.

Spark. Nay, faith, I'll make you laugh. It cannot
be, says a third lady. Yes, yes, quoth I again. Says
a fourth lady——

Horn. Look to't, we'll have no more ladies.

Spark. No— then mark, mark, now : said I to the
fourth, did you never see Mr. *Horner* ? he lodges in
Russel-street, and he's a sign of a man, you know ; hah,
ha, ha.

Horn. But the devil take me, if thine be the sign of
a jest.

Spark.

Spark. With that they all fell a laughing, till they bepiss'd themselves. What, but it does not move you, methinks? well, I see one had as good go to law without a witness, as break a jest without laughter, on one's side—come, come, sparks, but where do we dine? I have left at *Whitehall* an earl, to dine with you.

Dor. Why, I thought thou hadst lov'd a man with a title better than a suit with a *French* trimming to't.

Harc. Go to him again.

Spark. No, sir, a wit to me is the greatest title in the world.

Horn. But go dine with your earl, sir; he may be exceptionous: we are your friends, and will not take it ill to be left, I do assure you.

Harc. Nay, faith, he shall go to him.

Spark. Nay, pray, gentlemen.

Dor. We'll thrust you out, if you won't; what dis-appoint any body for us?

Spark. Nay, dear gentlemen, hear me.

Horn. No no, sir, by no means; pray go, sir.

Spark. Why, dear rogues. *(They all thrust him out)*

Dor. No, no. *(of the room.)*

All. Ha, ha, ha. *Sparkish returns.*

Spark. But, sparks, pray hear me: what d'ye think I'll eat then with gay shallow fops, and silent coxcombs? I think wit as necessary at dinner, as a glass of good wine; and that's the reason I never have any stomach when I eat alone—come, but where do we dine?

Horn. Ev'n where you will.

Spark. At *Chateline's*?

Dor. Yes, if you will.

Spark. Or at the *Cock*.

Dor. Yes, if you please.

Spark. Or at the *Dog* and *Partridge*?

Horn. Ay, if you have a mind to't; for we shall dine at neither.

Spark. Pshaw, with your fooling we shall lose the new play; and I wou'd no more miss seeing a new play the first day, than I wou'd miss sitting in the wits row. Therefore I'll go fetch my mistress, and away.

(Exit Sparkish.)
Manent

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Manent Horner, Harcourt, Dorilant. *Enter to them*
Mr. Pinchwife.

Horn. Who have we here? *Pinchwife?*

Pinch. Gentlemen, your humble servant.

Horn. Well, *Jack*, by thy long absence from the town, the grimness of thy countenance, and the slovenliness of thy habit, I shou'd give thee joy, shou'd I not, of marriage?

Pinch. Death! does he know I'm married too? I thought to have conceal'd it from him at least. (*Aside.* My long stay in the country will excuse my dress; and I have a suit of law that brings me up to town, that puts me out of humour: besides, I must give *Sparkish* to-morrow five thousand pounds to lie with his sister.

Horn. Nay, you country gentlemen, rather than not purchase, will buy any thing; and he is a crack'd tittle, if we may quibble. Well, but am I to give thee joy? I heard thou wert marry'd

Pinch. What then?

Horn. Why, the next thing that is to be heard, is, thou'rt a cuckold.

Pinch. Insupportable Name!

(*Aside.*

Horn. But I did not expect marriage from such a whore-master as you; one that knew the town so much, and women so well.

Pinch. Why, I have marry'd no *London* Wife.

Horn. Pshaw, that's all one: that grave circumspection in marrying a country wife, is like refusing a deceitful pamper'd *Smithfield* jade, to go and be cheated by a friend in the country

Pinch. A pox on him and his simile.

(*Aside.*

At least we are little surer of the breed there, know what her keeping has been, whether foil'd or unsound.

Horn. Come, come, I have known a clap gotten in *Wales*; and there are cousins, justices clerks, and chaplains in the country. I won't say coachmen. But she's handsome, and young?

Pinch. I'll answer as I shou'd do.

(*Aside.*

No, no; she has no beauty but her youth, no attraction but her modesty, wholesome, homely, and huswisely, that's all.

Dor. He talks as like a grafter as he looks.

Pinch.

Pinch. She's too aukard, ill-favour'd, and silly to bring to town.

Harc. Then methinks you shou'd bring her, to be taught breeding.

Pinch. To be taught! no, sir, I thank you, good wives and private soldiers shou'd be ignorant — I'll keep her from your instructions, I warrant you.

Harc. The rogue is as jealous, as if his wife were not ignorant. *(Aside.)*

Horn. Why, if she be ill-favour'd, there will be less danger here for you, than by leaving her in the country; we have such variety of dainties, that we are seldom hungry.

Dor. But they have always coarse, constant, swinging stomachs in the country.

Harc. Foul feeders indeed.

Dor. And your hospitality is great there.

Harc. Open house; every man's welcome.

Pinch. So, so, gentlemen.

Horn. But prithee, why shouldst thou marry her? if she be ugly, ill bred, and silly, she must be rich then?

Pinch. As rich as if she brought me twenty thousand pound out of this town; for she'll be as sure not to spend her moderate portion, as a *London* baggage wou'd be to spend hers, let it be what it wou'd: so 'tis all one. Then, because she's ugly, she's the likelier to be my own; and being ill bred, she'll hate conversation; and since silly and innocent, will not know the difference betwixt a man of one and twenty, and one of forty.

Horn. Nine,—to my knowledge: but if she be silly, she'll expect as much from a man of forty nine, as from him of one and twenty. But methinks wit is more necessary than beauty; and I think no young woman ugly that has it, and no handsome woman agreeable without it.

Pinch. 'Tis my maxim, he's a fool that marries; but he's greater that does not marry a fool: what is wit in a wife good for, but to make a man a cuckold?

Horn. Yes, to keep it from his knowledge.

Pinch. A fool cannot contrive to make her husband a cuckold.

Horn.

Horn. No ; but she'll club with a man that can : and what is worse, if she cannot make her husband a cuckold, she'll make him jealous, and pass for one ; and then 'tis all one.

Pinch. Well, well, I'll take care for one : my wife shall make me no cuckold, tho' she had your help, *Mr. Horner.* I understand the town, sir.

Dor. His help !

(Aside.

Harc. He's come newly to town, it seems, and has not heard how things are with him. *(Aside.*

Horn. But tell me, has marriage cured thee of whoring, which it seldom does ?

Harc. 'Tis more than Age can do.

Horn. No ; the word is, I'll marry and live honest : but a marriage vow is like a penitent gamester's oath, and entering into bonds and penalties to stint himself to such a particular small sum at play for the future, which makes him but the more eager ; and not being able to hold out, loses his money again, and his forfeit to boot.

Dor. Ay, ay, a gamester will be a gamester whilst his money lasts, and a whoremaster whilst his vigour.

Harc. Nay, I have known 'em, when they are broke, and can lose no more, keep a fumbling with the box in their hands to fool with only, and hinder other gamesters.

Dor. That had wherewithal to make lusty stakes.

Pinch. Well, gentlemen, you may laugh at me ; but you shall never lie with my wife : I know the town.

Horn. But prithee, was not the way you were in better ? is not keeping better than marriage ?

Pinch. A pox on't, the jades would jilt me, I could never keep a whore to my self.

Horn. So, then you only married to keep a whore to your self. Well, but let me tell you, women, as you say, are like soldiers, made constant and loyal by good pay, rather than by oaths and covenants : therefore I'd advise my friends to keep rather than marry, since too I find, by your example, it does not serve one's turn ; for I saw you yesterday in the eighteen-penny place with a pretty county wench.

Pinch.

Pinch. How the devil, did he see my wife then? I sat there that she might not be seen: but she shall never go to a play again. *(Aside.)*

Horn. What, dost thou blush at nine and forty for having been seen with a wench?

Dor. No, faith, I warrant 'twas his wife, which he seated there out of sight; for he's a cunning rogue, and understands the town.

Harc. He blushes: then 'twas his wife; for men are now more ashamed to be seen with them in publick, than with a wench.

Pinch. Hell and damnation! I'm undone, since *Horner* has seen her, and they know 'twas she. *(Aside.)*

Horn. But prithee, was it thy wife? she was exceeding pretty: I was in love with her at that distance.

Pinch. You are like never to be nearer to her. Your servant, gentlemen. *(Offers to go.)*

Horn. Nay, prithee stay.

Pinch. I cannot; I will not.

Horn. Come you shall dine with us.

Pinch. I have din'd already.

Horn. Come, I know thou hast not: I'll treat thee, dear rogue; thou shalt spend none of thy *Hampshire* money to day.

Pinch. Treat me! so, he uses me already like his cuckold. *(Aside.)*

Horn. Nay, you shall not go.

Pinch. I must; I have business at home.

(Exit Pinchwife.)

Harc. To beat his wife, He's as jealous of her, as a *Cheapside* husband of a *Covent-Garden* wife.

Horn. Why, 'tis as hard to find an old whoremaster without jealousy and the gout, as a young one without fear of the pox.

*As gout in age, from pox in youth proceeds;
So wenching past, the jealousy succeeds:
The worst disease that love and wenching breeds.* }

ACT. II. SCENE. I.

Mrs. Margery Pinchwife and Alithea: Mr. Pinchwife peeping behind at the door.

Mrs. Pinchwife.

PRAY, sister, where are the best fields and woods, to walk in, in *London*?

Alith. A pretty question! why, sister, *Mulberry-Garden* and *St. James's Park*; and for close walks, the *New Exchange*.

Mrs. Pinch. Pray, sister, tell me why my husband looks so grum here in town, and keeps me up so close, and will not let me go a walking, nor let me wear my best gown yesterday.

Alith. O, he's jealous, sister.

Mrs. Pinch. Jealous: what's that?

Alith. He's afraid you shou'd love another man.

Mrs. Pinch. How shou'd he be afraid of my loving another man, when he will not let me see any but himself.

Alith. Did he not carry you yesterday to a play?

Mrs. Pinch. Ay; but we sat amongst ugly people: he wou'd not let me come near the gentry, who sat under us, so that I cou'd not see 'em. He told me none but naughty women sat there, whom they tous'd and mous'd: but I wou'd have ventur'd for all that.

Alith. But how did you like the play?

Mrs. Pinch. Indeed I was weary of the play; but I lik'd hugely the Actors: they are the goodliest, properest men, sister.

Alith. O, but you must not like the Actors, sister.

Mrs. Pinch. Ay, how shou'd I help it, sister: pray sister, when my husband comes in, will you ask leave for me to go a walking?

Alith. A walking, ha, ha; lord, a country gentlewoman's pleasure is the drudgery of a foot-post; and she requires as much airing as her husband's horses.

(Aside.)
Enter

Enter Mr. Pinchwife to them.

But here comes your husband : I'll ask, tho' I'm sure he'll not grant it.

Mrs. Pinch. He says he won't let me go abroad, for fear of catching the pox.

Alith. Fie ; the small pox, you shou'd say.

Mrs. Pinch. O my dear, dear bud, welcome home : why dost thou look so froppish ? who has anger'd thee.

Mr. Pinch. You're a fool.

(Mrs. Pinchwife goes aside and cries.

Alith. Faith, so she is, for crying for no fault, poor tender creature !

Mr. Pinch. What, you wou'd have her as impudent as your self, as errant a jilflirt, a gadder, a magpye ; and to say all, a mere notorious town-woman ?

Alith. Brother, you are my only censurer ; and the honour of your family will sooner suffer in your wife there, than in me, tho' I take the innocent liberty of the town.

Mr. Pinch. Hark you, mistress, do not talk so before my wife : the innocent liberty of the town.

Alith. Why, pray who boasts of any intrigue with me ? what lampoons has made my name notorious ? what ill women frequent my lodgings ? I keep no company with any women of scandalous reputations.

Mr. Pinch. No, you keep the men of scandalous reputations company.

Alith. Where ? wou'd you not have me civil ? answer 'em in a box at the plays, in the drawing-room at *Whitehall*, in *St. James's Park*, *Mulberry-Garden*, or—

Mr. Pinch. Hold, hold ; do not teach my wife where the men are to be found : I believe she's the worse for your town-documents already. I bid you keep her in ignorance as I do,

Mrs. Pinch. Indeed, be not angry with her, bud, she will tell me nothing of the town, tho' I ask her a thousand times a day.

Mr. Pinch. Then you are very inquisitive to know, I find ?

Mrs. Pinch. Not I, indeed, dear ; I hate *London* : our place-house in the country is worth a thousand of it ; wou'd I were there again.

Mr. Pinch.

Mr. Pinch. So you shall, I warrant. But were you not talking of plays and players when I came in? you are her encourager in such discourses.

Mrs. Pinch. No, indeed, dear; she chid me just now for liking the player-men.

Mr. Pinch. Nay, if she be so innocent as to own to me her liking them, there is no hurt in't— (*Aside.* Come, my poor rogue, but thou lik'st none better than me?)

Mrs. Pinch. Yes, indeed, but I do: the player-men are finer folks.

Mr. Pinch. But you love none better than me?

Mrs. Pinch. You are my own dear bud, and I know you: I hate a stranger.

Mr. Pinch. Ay, my dear, you must love me only; and not be like the naughty town-women, who only hate their husbands, and love every man else, love plays, visits, fine coaches, fine cloaths, fiddles, balls, treats, and so lead a wicked town-life.

Mrs. Pinch. Nay, if to enjoy all these things be a town-life, London is not so bad a place, dear.

Mr. Pinch. How! if you love me, you must hate London.

Alth. The fool has forbid me discovering to her the pleasures of the town, and he is now setting her agog upon them himself. (*Aside.*

Mrs. Pinch. But, husband, do the town-women love the player-men too?

Mr. Pinch. Yes, I warrant you.

Mrs. Pinch. Ay, I warrant you.

Mr. Pinch. Why, you do not, I hope?

Mrs. Pinch. No, no, bud: but why have we no player-men in the country?

Mr. Pinch. Ha——*Mrs. Minx*, ask me no more to go to a play.

Mrs. Pinch. Nay, why, love? I did not care for going: but when you forbid me, you make me, as 'twere, desire it.

Alth. So 'twill be in other things, I warrant.

(*Aside.*

Mrs. Pinch. Pray, let me go to a play, dear?

Mr. Pinch. Hold your peace; I wo'not.

Mrs. Pinch. Why, love?

Mr. Pinch.

Mr. Pinch. Why, I'll tell you.

Alib. Nay, if he tells her, she'll give him more cause to forbid her that place. *(Aside.)*

Mrs. Pinch. Pray, why, dear?

Mr. Pinch. First, you like the actors; and the gallants may like you.

Mrs. Pinch. What a homely country girl! no, bud, no body will like me.

Mr. Pinch. I tell you, yes, they may.

Mrs. Pinch. No, no, you jest——I won't believe you: I will go.

Mr. Pinch. I tell you then, that one of the leudest fellows in town, who saw you there, told me he was in love with you.

Mrs. Pinch. Indeed! who, who, pray who was't?

Mr. Pinch. I've gone too far, and slipt before I was aware: how overjoy'd she is! *(Aside.)*

Mrs. Pinch. Was it any *Hampshire* gallant, any of our neighbours? I promise you I am beholden to him.

Mr. Pinch. I promise you, you lye; for he wou'd but ruin you, as he has done hundreds: he has no other love for women, but that such as he look upon women like basilisks, but to destroy 'em.

Mrs. Pinch. Ay, but if he loves me, why shou'd he ruin me? answer me to that: methinks he shou'd not. I wou'd do him no harm.

Alib. Ha, ha, ha.

Mr. Pinch. 'Tis very well; but I'll keep him from doing you any harm, or me either.

Enter Sparkish and Harcourt.

But here comes company, get you in, get you in.

Mrs. Pinch. But pray, husband, is he a pretty gentleman that loves me?

Mr. Pinch. In baggage, in.

(Thrusts her in and shuts the door.)

What, all the leud libertines of the town brought to my lodging, by this easy coxcomb! S'death I'll not suffer it.

Spark. Here *Harcourt*, do you approve my choice? dear little rogue, I told you I'd bring you acquainted with all my friends, the wits and——

(Harcourt salutes her.)

Mr. Pinch.

Mr. Pinch. Ay, they shall know her, as well as you your self will, I warrant you.

Spark. This is one of those, my pretty rouge, that are to dance at your wedding to morrow: and him you must bid welcome ever, to what you and I have.

Mr. Pinch. Monstrous! — (Aside.)

Spark. Harcourt, how dost thou like her, faith? nay, dear, do not look down; I should hate to have a wife of mine out of countenance at any thing.

Mr. Pinch. Wonderful!

Spark. Tell me, I say, Harcourt, how dost thou like her? thou hast star'd upon her enough, to resolve me.

Harc. So infinitely well, that I cou'd wish I had a mistress too, that might differ from her in nothing, but her love and engagement to you.

Alith. Sir, master Sparkish has often told me, that his acquaintance were all wits and railers, and now I find it.

Spark. No, by the universe, madam, he does not rally now; you may believe him: I do assure you, he is the honestest, worthiest, true hearted gentleman—a man of such perfect honour, he wou'd say nothing to a lady, he does not mean.

Mr. Pinch. Praising another man to his mistress!

Harc. Sir, you are so beyond expectation obliging, that——

Spark. Nay, i'gad; I am sure you do admire her extremely, I see't in your eyes——He does admire you, madam.——By the world, don't you?

Harc. Yes, above the world, or, the most glorious part of it, her whole sex: and till now I never thought I shou'd have envied you, or any man about to marry, but you have the best excuse for marriage I ever knew.

Alith. Nay, now, sir, I'm satisfied you are of the society of the wits and railers, since you cannot spare your friend, even when he is but too civil to you; but the surest sign is, you are an enemy to marriage, for that I hear you hate as much as business or bad wine.

Harc. Truly, madam, I was never an enemy to marriage, till now, because marriage was never an enemy to me before.

Alith. But why, sir, is marriage an enemy to you now? because it robs you of your friend here? for you look upon a friend married, as one into a monastery, that is dead to the world.

Harc. 'Tis indeed, because you marry him; I see, madam, you can guess my meaning: I do confess heartily and openly, I wish it were in my power to break the match; by heavens I wou'd,

Spark. Poor *Frank*!

Alith. Wou'd you be so unkind to me?

Harc. No, no, 'tis not because I wou'd be unkind to you.

Spark. Poor *Frank*, no gad, 'tis only his kindness to me.

Mr. Pinch. Great kindness to you indeed; insensible fop, let a man make love to his wife to his face!

(*Aside.*

Spark. Come, dear *Frank*, for all my wife there, that shall be, thou shalt enjoy me sometimes, dear rogue: by my honour, we men of wit condole for our deceased brother in marriage, as much as for one dead in earnest: I think that was prettily said of me, ha, *Harcourt*? — but come, *Frank*, be not melancholy for me.

Harc. No, I assure you, I am not melancholy for you.

Spark. Prithee, *Frank*, dost think my wife that shall be there, a fine person?

Harc. I cou'd gaze upon her, till I became as blind as you are.

Spark. How as I am? how?

Harc. Because you are a lover, and true lovers are blind, stock blind.

Spark. True, true; but by the world she has wit too, as well as beauty: go, go with her into a corner, and try if she has wit, talk to her any thing, she's bashful before me.

Harc. Indeed, if a woman wants wit in a corner, she has it no where.

Alith. Sir, you dispose of me a little before your time —

(*Aside to Sparkish.*

Spark. Nay, nay, madam, let me have an earnest of your

your obedience, or, —go, go, madam—

(Harcourt courts Alithea *Aside*.)

Mr. Pinch. How, sir, if you are not concern'd for the honour of a wife, I am for that of a sister; he shall not debauch her: be a pander to your own wife, bring men to her, let 'em make love before your face, thrust 'em into a corner together, then leave 'em in private! is this your town wit and conduct?

Spark. Ha, ha, ha, a silly wife rogue wou'd make one laugh more than a stark fool, ha ha; I shall burst. Nay you shall not disturb 'em; I'll vex thee by the world.

(Struggles with Pinch. to keep him from Harcourt and Alith.)

Alith. The writings are drawn, sir, settlements made; 'tis too late, sir, and past all revocation.

Harc. Then so is my death.

Alith. I wou'd not be unjust to him.

Harc. Then why to me so?

Alith. I have no obligation to you.

Harc. My love.

Alith. I had his before.

Harc. You never had it; he wants, you see, jealousy, the only infallible sign of it.

Alith. Love proceeds from esteem; he cannot distrust my virtue; besides, he loves me, or he wou'd not marry me.

Harc. Marrying you, is no more sign of his love, than bribing your woman, that he may marry you, is a sign of his generosity: marriage is rather a sign of interest, than love; and he that marries a fortune, covets a mistress, not loves her: but if you take marriage for a sign of love, take it from me immediately.

Alith. No, now you have put a scruple in my head; but in short, sir, to end our dispute, I must marry him, my reputation would suffer in the world else.

Harc. No; if you do marry him, with your pardon, madam, your reputation suffers in the world, and you wou'd be thought in necessity for a cloak.

Alith. Nay, now you are rude, sir —Mr. Sparkish, pray come hither, your friend is very troublesome, and very loving.

Harc. Hold, hold:—

(*Aside to Alithea.*)

Mr. Pinch. D'ye hear that?

Spark. Why d'ye think I'll seem to be jealous, like a country bumpkin?

Mr. Pinch. No, rather be a cuckold, like a credulous cit.

Harc. Madam, you wou'd not have been so little generous as to have told him.

Alith. Yes, since you cou'd be so little generous, as to wrong him.

Harc. Wrong him, no man can do't, he's beneath an injury; a bubble, a coward, a senseless idiot, a wretch so contemptible to all the world but you, that——

Alith. Hold, do not rail at him, for since he is like to be my husband, I am resolv'd to like him: nay, I think I am oblig'd to tell him, you are not his friend——master *Sparkish*, master *Sparkish*.

Spark. What, what; now dear rogue, has not she wit?

Harc. Not so much as I thought, and hoped she had.
(*Speaks furiously.*)

Alith. Mr. *Sparkish*, do you bring people to rail at you?

Harc. Madam——

Spark. How! no; but if he does rail at me, 'tis but in jest I warrant? what we wits do for one another, and never take any notice of it.

Alith. He spoke so scurrilously of you, I had no patience to hear him; besides he has been making love to me.

Harc. True, damn'd tell-tale woman. (*Aside.*)

Spark. Pshaw, to shew his parts—we wits rail and make love often, but to shew our parts; as we have no affections, so we have no malice, we——

Alith. He said you were a wretch, below an injury.

Spark. Pshaw.

Harc. Damn'd, senseless, impudent, virtuous jade; well since she won't let me have her, she'll do as good, she'll make me hate her

Alith. I common bubble.

Spark. Pshaw.

Alith. A coward.

Spark. Pshaw, pshaw.

Alith. A senseless driveling idiot.

Spark.

Spark. How ! did he disparage my parts ? nay, then my honour's concern'd, I can't put up that, sir ; by the world, brother, help me to kill him ; (I may draw new, since we have the odds of him : — 'tis a good occasion too before my mistress) *(Aside.*

Alith. Hold, hold.

(Offers to draw.

Spark. What, what ?

Alith. I must not let 'em kill the gentleman neither for his kindness to me ; I am so far from hating him, that I wish my gallant had his person and understanding : —

(Nay if my honour—

(Aside.

Spark. I'll be thy death.

Alith. Hold, hold, indeed to tell the truth, the gentleman said after all, that what he spoke, was but out of friendship to you.

Spark. How ! say I am, I am a fool, that is no wit, out of friendship to me !

Alith. Yes, to try whether I was concern'd enough for you ; and made love to me only to be satisfy'd of my virtue, for your sake.

Harc. Kind however—

(Aside.

Spark. Nay, if it were so, my dear rogue, I ask thee pardon ; but why wou'd not you tell me so, faith ?

Harc. Because I did not think on't, faith.

Spark. Come, *Horner* does not come, *Harcourt* let's be gone to the new play — come, madam.

Alith. I will not go, if you intend to leave me alone in the box and run into the Pit, as you use to do.

Spark. Pshaw, I'll leave *Harcourt* with you in the box to entertain you, and that's as good ; if I sat in the box, I should be thought no judge, but of trimmings. — Come away, *Harcourt* lead her down.

(Exeunt Sparkish, Harcourt, and Alithea.

Mr. Pinch. Well, go thy ways, for the flower of the true town fops, such as spend their estates before they come to 'em, and are cuckolds before they are married. But let me go look to my own freehold—how—

Enter my Lady Fidget, Mistress Dainty Fidget, and Mistress Squeamish.

Lady Fdg. Your servant, sir, where is your lady ? we are come to wait upon her to the new play.

Mr. Pinch. New play!

Lady Fidg. And my husband will wait upon you presently.

Mr. Pinch. Damn your civility—— *(Aside.*
Madam, by no means, I will not see fir *Yasper* here, till I have waited upon him at home; nor shall my wife see you, till she has waited upon your ladyship at your lodgings.

Lady Fidg. Now we are here, fir——

Mr. Pinch. No, madam.

Dainty. Pray let us see her.

Squeam. We will not stir, till we see her.

Mr. Pinch. A pox on you all—— *(Aside.*

(Goes to the door, and returns.

She has lock'd the door, and is gone abroad.

Lady Fidg. No, you have lock'd the door, and she's within.

Daint. They told us below, she was here.

Mr. Pinch. (Will nothing do?) —well it must our then, to tell you the truth, ladies, which I was afraid to let you know before, lest it might endanger your lives, my wife has just now the small pox come out upon her, do not be frighten'd; but pray, be gone ladies, you shall not stay here in danger of your lives; pray get you gone, ladies.

Lady Fidg. No, no, we have all had 'em.

Squeam. Alack, alack!

Daint. Come, come, we must see how it goes with her, I understand the disease.

Lady Fidg. Come.

Mr. Pinch. Well, there is no being too hard for women at their own weapons, lying; therefore I'll quit the field.

(Aside.) (Ex. Pinchwife

Squeam. Here's an example of jealousy!

Lady Fidg. Indeed, as the world goes, I wonder there are no more jealous, since wives are so neglected.

Daint. Pshaw, as the world goes, to what end shou'd they be jealous?

Lady Fidg. Foh, 'tis a nasty world.

Squeam. That men of parts, great acquaintance, and quality, shou'd take up with, and spend themselves and fortunes, in keeping little-play house creatures, foh!

Lady Fidg.

Lady Fidg. Nay, that women of understanding, great acquaintance, and good quality, shou'd fall a keeping too of little creatures, foh!

Squeam. Why, 'tis the men of qualities fault, they never visit women of honour, and reputation, as they us'd to do; and have not so much as common civility for ladies of our rank, but use us with the same indifferency, and ill breeding, as if we were all married to 'em.

Lady Fidg. She says true, 'tis an errant shame women of my quality shou'd be so slighted; methinks, birth, birth, shou'd go for something; I have known men admired, courted, and followed for their titles only.

Squeam. Ay, one wou'd think men of honour shou'd not love, no more than marry, out of their own rank.

Daint. Fie, fie upon 'em, they are come to think cross breeding for themselves best, as well as for their dogs and horses.

Lady Fidg. They are dogs and horses for't.

Squeam. One wou'd think, if not for love, for vanity a little.

Daint. Nay, they do satisfy their vanity upon us sometimes; and are kind to us in their report, tell all the world they lie with us.

Lady Fidg. Damn'd rascals, that we shou'd be only wrong'd by 'em; to report a man has had a person, when he has not had a person, is the greatest wrong in the whole world, that can be done to a person.

Squeam. Well, 'tis an errant shame, noble persons shou'd be so wrong'd and neglected.

Lady Fidg. But still 'tis an errant shame for a noble person, to neglect her own honour, and defame her own noble person, with little inconsiderable fellows, foh——

Daint. I suppose the crime against our honour, is the the same with a man of quality, as with another.

Lady Fidg. How! no sure, the man of quality is likest one's husband, and therefore the fault shou'd be the less.

Daint. But then the pleasure shou'd be the less.

Lady Fidg. Fie, fie, fie, for shame sister, whither shall we ramble? be continent in your discourse, or I shall hate you,

Daint. Besides an intrigue is so much the more notorious for the man's quality.

Squeam. 'Tis true, no body takes notice of a private man, and therefore with him 'tis more secret; and the crime's the less, when 'tis not known.

Lady Fidg. You say true; y'faith, I think you are in the right on't: 'tis not an injury to a husband, till it be an injury to our honours; so that a woman of honour loses no honour with a private person; and to say truth——

Daint. So the little fellow is grown a private person——with her——
(*Apart to Squeam.*)

Lady Fidg. But still my dear, dear honour——

Enter Sir Jasper, Horner, Dorilant.

Sir Jasp. Ay, my dear, dear of honour, thou hast still so much honour in thy mouth——

Horn That she has none elsewhere—— (*Aside.*)

Lady Fidg. Oh, what d'ye mean to bring in these upon us?

Daint. Foh, these are as bad as wits.

Squeam. Foh!

Lady Fidg. Let us leave the room.

Sir Jasp. Stay, stay, faith to tell you the naked truth——

Lady Fidg. Fie, sir *Jasper*, do not use that word naked.

Sir Jasp. Well, well, in short I have business at *Whitehall*, and cannot go to the play with you, therefore wou'd have you go——

Lady Fidg. With those two to a play?

Sir Jasp. No, not with r'other, but with Mr. *Hornner*, there can be no more scandal to go with him, than with Mr. *Tattle*, or master *Limberham*.

Lady Fidg. With that nasty fellow! no —— no.

Sir Jasp. Nay, prithee dear, hear me.

(*Whispers to Lady Fidg.*)

Horn. Ladies.

(*Horner, Dorilant drawing near.*)

Squeamish and Daint.

Daint Stand off

Squeam. Do not approach us.

Daint. We heard, with the wits you are obscenity all over.

Squeam:

Squeam. And I wou'd as soon look upon a picture of Adam and Eve, without fig-leaves, as any of you, if I cou'd help it, therefore keep off and do not make us sick.

Dor. What a devil are these?

Horn. Why, these are pretenders to honour, as criticks to wit, only by censuring others; and as every raw peevish, out-of-humour'd, affected, dull, tea-drinking, arithmetical fop sets up for a wit, by railing at men of sense, so these for honour, by railing at the court, and ladies of as great honour as quality.

Sir Yasp. Come, Mr. *Horner*, I must desire you to go with these ladies to the play, sir.

Horn. I! sir.

Sir Yasp. Ay, ay, come, sir.

Horn. I must beg your pardon, sir, and theirs, I will not be seen in woman's company in publick again for the world.

Sir Yasp. Ha, ha, strange aversion!

Squeam. No, he's for woman's company in private.

Sir Yasp. He—poor man—he—ha, ha, ha.

Daint. 'Tis a greater shame amongst leud fellows to be seen in virtuous womens company, than for the women to be seen with them.

Horn. Indeed, madam, the time was I only hated virtuous women, but now I hate the other too; I beg your pardon, ladies.

Lady Fidg. You are very obliging, sir, because we wou'd not be troubled with you.

Sir Yasp. In sober sadness he shall go.

Dor. Nay, if he wo't not, I am ready to wait upon the ladies; and I think I am the fitter man.

Sir Yasp. You, sir, no, I thank you for that—master *Horner* is a privileg'd man amongst the virtuous ladies, 'twill be a great while before you are so; he, he, he, he's my wife's gallant, he, he, he; no, pray withdraw, sir, for as I take it, the virtuous ladies have no business with you.

Dor. And I am sure he can have none with them; 'tis strange a man can't come amongst virtuous women now, but upon the same terms as men are admitted into the great *Turk's* seraglio: but heavens keep me from

being an ombre player with 'em. But where is *Pinchwife*.
——(Exit Dorilant.

Sir *Jasp.* Come, come, man, what avoid the sweet society of women-kind? that sweet, soft, gentle, tame, noble creature woman, made for man's companion—

Horn. So is that soft, gentle, tame, and more noble creature a spaniel, that has all their tricks; can fawn, lie down, suffer beating, and fawn the more; barks at your friends when they come to see you, makes your bed hard, gives you fleas, and the mange sometimes: and all the difference is, the spaniel's the more faithful animal, and fawns but upon one master.

Sir *Jasp.* He, he, he.

Squeam. O, the rude beast!

Daint. Insolent brute!

Lady *Fidg.* Brute! stinking, mortify'd, rotten *French* weather, to dare——

Sir *Jasp.* Hold, an't please your ladyship: for shame, master *Horn*, your mother was a woman——
Now shall I never reconcile 'em. [Aside.

Hark you, madam, take my advice in your anger: you know you often want one to make up your drolling pack of ombre players, and you may cheat him easily; for he's an ill gamester, and consequently loves play. Besides, you know you have but two old civil gentlemen (with stinking breaths too) to wait upon you abroad; take in the third into your service: the others are but crazy; and a lady shou'd have a supernumerary gentleman-usher as a supernumerary coach-horse, lest sometimes you shou'd be forc'd to stay at home.

Lady *Fidg.* But are you sure he loves play, and has money?

Sir *Jasp.* He loves play as much as you, and has money, as much as I.

Lady *Fidg.* Then I am contented to make him pay for his scurrility: money makes up in a measure all other wants in men—Those whom we cannot make hold for gallants, we make fine. [Aside.

Sir *Jasp.* So, so; now to mollify, to wheedle him,—

[Aside.

Master *Horn*, will you never keep civil company? methinks 'tis time now, since you are only fit for them.

Come

Come, come, man, you must e'en fall to visiting our wives, eating at our tables, drinking tea with our virtuous relations after dinner, dealing cards to 'em, reading plays and gazettes to 'em, picking fleas out of their smocks for 'em, collecting receipts, new songs, women, pages, and footmen for 'em.

Horn. I hope they'll afford me better employment, sir.

Sir Jasp. He, he, he; 'tis fit you know your work before you come into your place: and since you are unprovided of a lady to flatter, and a good house to eat at, pray frequent mine, and call my wife mistress, and she shall call you gallant, according to the custom.

Horn. Who I?

Sir Jasp. Faith, thou shalt for my sake; come, for my sake only.

Horn. For your sake——

Sir Jasp. Come, come, here's a gamester for you; let him be a little familiar sometimes, nay, what if a little rude? gamesters may be rude with ladies, you know.

Lady Fdg. Yes, losing gamesters have a privilege with women.

Horn. I always thought the contrary, that the winning gamester had most privilege with women; for when you have lost your money to a man, you'll lose any thing you have, all you have, they say, and he may use you as he pleases.

Sir Jasp. He, he, he; well, win or lose, you shall have your liberty with her.

Lady Fdg. As he behaves himself; and for your sake I'll give him admittance and freedom.

Horn. All sorts of freedom, madam?

Sir Jasp. Ay, ay, ay, all sorts of freedom thou canst take: and so go to her, begin thy new employment; wheedle her, jest with her, and be better acquainted one with another.

Horn. I think I know her already; and therefore may venture with her my secret for hers

(*Aside.*
(Horn and Lady Fidget whisper.)

Sir Jasp. Sister cuz, I have provided an innocent play-fellow for you there.

Daint. Who he!

(*Squeamish.*)

Squeam. There's a play-fellow, indeed !

Sir Jasp. Yes sure : what, he is good enough to play at cards, blindman's-buff, or the fool with sometimes.

Squeam. Foh, we'll have no such play-fellows.

Daint. No, sir ; you shan't chuse play-fellows for us, we thank you.

Sir Jasp. Nay, pray hear me. (*Whispering to them.*)

Lady Fidg. But, poor gentleman, cou'd you be so generous, so truly a man of honour, as for the sake of us women of honour to cause your self to be reported no man ? no man ! and to suffer your self the greatest shame that cou'd fall upon a man, that none might fall upon us women by your conversation ? but indeed, sir, as perfectly, perfectly, the same man as before your going into *France*, sir ; as perfectly, perfectly, sir ?

Horn. As perfectly, perfectly, madam : nay, I scorn you shou'd take my word ; I desire to be try'd only, madam.

Lady Fidg. Well, that's spoken again like a man of honour : all men of honour desires to come to the test. But indeed, generally you men report such things of your selves, one does not know how or whom to believe ; and it is come to that pass, we dare not take your words no more than your taylors, without some staid servant, of yours be bound with you. But I have so strong a faith in your honour, dear, dear noble sir, that I'd forfeit mine for yours at any time, dear sir.

Horn. No, madam, you shou'd not need to forfeit it for me ; I have given you security already to save you harmless, my late reputation being so well known in the world, madam.

Lady Fidg. But if upon any future falling out, or upon the suspicion of my taking the trust out of your hands, to employ some other, you your self shou'd betray your trust, dear sir ? I mean, if you'll give me leave to speak obscenely, you might tell, dear sir.

Horn. If I did, no body wou'd believe me : the reputation of impotency is as hardly recover'd again in the world, as that of cowardice, dear madam.

Lady Fidg. Nay then, as one may say, you may do your worst, dear sir.

Sir Jasp.

Sir *Jasp.* Come, is your ladyship reconcil'd to him yet? have you agreed on matters? for I must be gone to *Whitehall*.

Lady *Fidg.* Why indeed, sir *Jasper*, master *Horn* is a thousand, thousand times a better man than I thought him. Cousin *Squeamish*, sister *Dainty*, I can name him now: truly, not long ago, you know, I thought his very name obscenity; and I wou'd as soon have lain with him, as have nam'd him.

Sir *Jasp.* Very likely, poor madam.

Daint. I believe it.

Squeam No doubt on't.

Sir *Jasp.* Well, well — that your ladyship is virtuous as any she—I know, and him all the town knows—he, he, he: therefore, now you like him, get you gone to your business together, go, go to your business, I say, pleasure, whilst I go to my pleasure, business.

Lady *Fidg.* Come then, dear gallant.

Horn. Come away, my dearest mistress.

Sir *Jasp.* So, so, why, 'tis as I'd have it.

(*Exit Sir Jasper.*)

Horn. And as I'd have it.

Lady *Fidg.* *Who for his business, from his wife will run,
Takes the best care to have her business done.*

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

ACT III. SCENE. I.

Alithea and Mrs. Pinchwife.

Alithea.

Sister, what ails you? you are grown melancholy.
Mrs *Pinch.* Wou'd it not make any one melancholy, to see you go every day fluttering about abroad, whilst I must stay at home like a poor lonely fullen bird in a cage?

Alith. Ay, sister; but you came young, and just from the nest to your cage; so that I thought you lik'd it, and cou'd be as chearful in't as others that took their flight

flight themselves early, and hopping abroad in the open air.

Mrs. Pinch. Nay, I confess I was quiet enough, till my husband told me what pure lives the *London* ladies live abroad, with their dancing, meetings, and junquetings, and dress'd every day in their best gowns; and I warrant you, play at nine-pins every day of the week, so they do.

Enter Mr. Pinchwife.

Mr. Pinch. Come, what's here to do; you are putting the town pleasures in her head, and setting her a longing.

Alith. Yes, after nine-pins: you suffer none to give her those longings you mean, but your self.

Mr. Pinch. I tell her of the vanities of the town like a confessor.

Alith. A confessor! just such a confessor, as he that by forbidding a silly hostler to grease the horses teeth, taught him to do't.

Mr. Pinch. Come, mistress *Flippant*, good precepts are lost when bad examples are still before us: the liberty you take abroad makes her hanker after it, and out of humour at home: poor wretch! she desired not to come to *London*; I would bring her.

Alith. Very well.

Mr. Pinch. She has been this week in town, and ne'er desired till this afternoon to go abroad.

Alith. Was she not at a play yesterday?

Mr. Pinch. Yes; but she ne'er ask'd me: I was myself the cause of her going.

Alith. Then if she ask you again, you are the cause of her asking, and not my example.

Mr. Pinch. Well, to-morrow night I shall be rid of you; and the next day, before 'tis light, she and I'll be rid of the town, and my dreadful apprehensions. Come, be not melancholy; for thou shalt go into the country after to-morrow, dearest.

Alith. Great comfort!

Mrs. Pinch. Pish, what d'ye tell me of the country for?

Mr. Pinch. How's this! what, pish at the country?

Mrs. Pinch. Let me alone, I am not well.

Mr. Pinch,

Mr. *Pinch*. O, if that be all—what ails my dearest?

Mrs. *Pinch*. Truly, I don't know: but I have not been well since you told me there was a gallant at the play in love with me.

Mr. *Pinch*. Ha——

Alib. That's by my example too!

Mr. *Pinch*. Nay, if you are not well, but are so concern'd, because a leud fellow chanc'd to lye, and say he lik'd you, y^ell make me sick too.

Mrs. *Pinch*. Of what sickness?

Mr. *Pinch*. O, of that which is worse than the plague, jealousy.

Mr. *Pinch*. Pish, you jeer; I'm sure there's no such disease in our receipt-book at home.

Mr. *Pinch*. No, thou never mer'it with it, poor innocent——well, if thou cuckold me, 'twill be my own fault—for cuckolds and bastards are generally makers of their own fortune. *(Aside)*

Mrs. *Pinch*. Well, but pray, bud, let's go to a play to night.

Mr. *Pinch*. 'Tis just done, she comes from it: but why are you so eager to see a play?

Mrs. *Pinch*. Faith, dear, not that I care one pin for their talk there; but I like to look upon the players and wou'd see, if I cou'd, the gallant you say loves me! that's all, dear bud.

Mr. *Pinch*. Is that all, dear bud?

Alib. This proceeds from my example!

Mrs. *Pinch*. But if the play be done, let's go abroad however, dear bud.

Mr. *Pinch*. Come, have a little patience, and thou shalt go into the country on friday.

Mrs. *Pinch*. Therefore I wou'd see first some fights, to tell my neighbours of: nay, I will go abroad that's for once.

Alib. I'm the cause of this desire too!

Mr. *Pinch*. But now I think on't, who, who was the cause of *Horner* coming to my lodging to day? that was you.

Alib. No, you, because you wou'd not let him see your handsome wife out of your lodging.

Mrs. *Pinch*. Why, O lord! did the gentleman come hither to see me indeed?

Mr,

Mr. *Pinch*. No, no — you are not the cause of that damn'd question too, mistress *Alithea*? — (well she's in the right of it: he is in love with my wife — and comes after her—'tis so—but I'll nip his love in the bud; lest he shou'd follow us into the country, and break his chariot-wheel near our house, on purpose for an excuse to come to't. But I think I know the town.)

(*Aside.*

Mrs. *Pinch*. Come, pray bud, let's go abroad before 'tis late; for I will go, that's flat and plain.

Mr. *Pinch*. So! the obstinacy already of the town-wife; and I must, whilst she's here, humour her like one.

(*Aside.*

Sister, how shall we do, that she may not be seen or known?

Alitb. Let her put on her mask.

Mr. *Pinch*. Pshaw, a mask makes people but the more inquisitive, and is as ridiculous a disguise as a stage-beard: her shape, stature, habit, will be known. And if we shou'd meet with *Horner*, he wou'd be sure to take acquaintance with us, must wish her joy, kiss her, talk to her, leer upon her, and the devil and all. No, I'll not use her to a mask, 'tis dangerous? for masks have made more cuckolds than the best faces that ever were known.

Alitb. How will yo do then?

Mrs. *Pinch*. Nay, shall we go? the *Exchange* will be shut; and I have a mind to see that.

Mr. *Pinch*. So—I have it — I'll dress her up in the suit we are to carry down to her brother, little sir *James*; nay, I understand the town-tricks. Come, let's go dress her: a mask! no — a woman mask'd, like a cover'd dish, gives a man curiosity and appetite; when it may be, uncover'd, 'twould turn his stomach: no, no.

Alitb. Indeed your comparison is something a greasy one: but I had a gentle gallant, us'd to say, a beaurty mask'd, like the sun in eclipse, gathers together more gazers than if it shin'd out.

(*Exeunt.*

The SCENE changes to the new exchange.

Enter Horner, Harcourt, Dorilant.

Dor. Engag'd to women, and not sup with us!

Horn. Ay, pox on 'em all.

Harc. You were much a more reasonable man in the morning, and had as noble resolutions against 'em, as a widower of a week's liberty.

Dor. Did I ever think to see you keep company with women in vain?

Horn. In vain! no — 'tis since I can't love 'em, to be reveng'd on 'em.

Harc. Now your sting is gone, you look'd in the box, amongst all those women, like a drone in the hive; all upon you, shov'd and ill us'd by 'em all, and thrust from one side to t'other,

Dor. Yet he must be a buzzing amongst 'em still, like other old beetle-headed liquorish drones: avoid 'em, and hate 'em, as they hate you.

Horn. Because I do hate 'em, and wou'd hate 'em yet more, I'll frequent 'em. You may see by marriage, nothing makes a man hate a woman more, than her constant conversation. In short, I converse with 'em, as you do with rich fools, to laugh at 'em, and use 'em ill.

Dor. But I wou'd no more sup with women, unless I cou'd lie with 'em, than sup with a rich coxcomb, unless I cou'd cheat him.

Horn. Yes; I have known thee sup with a fool for his drinking; if he cou'd set out your hand that way only, you were satisfied; and if he were a wine-swallowing mouth, 'twas enough.

Harc. Yes, a man drinks often with a fool, as he tosses with a marker, only to keep his hand in use. But do the ladies drink?

Horn. Yes, sir; and I shall have the pleasure at least of laying 'em flat with a bottle, and bring as much scandal that way upon 'em, as formerly t'other.

Harc. Perhaps you may prove as weak a brother among 'em that way, as t'other.

Dor.

Dor. Foh, drinking with women is as unnatural as scolding with 'em : but 'tis a pleasure of decay'd fornicators, and the basest way of quenching love.

Harc. Nay, 'tis drowning love, instead of quenching it : but leaves us for civil women too !

Dor. Ay, when he can't be the better for 'em : we hardly pardon a man that leaves his friend for a wench, and that's a pretty lawful call.

Horn. Faith, I wou'd not leave you for 'em, if they wou'd not drink.

Dor. Who wou'd disappoint his company at *Lewis's* for a gossiping ?

Harc. Foh, wine and women good apart, together as nauseous as sack and sugar. But hark you, sir, before you go, a little of your advice ; an old maim'd general, when unfit for action, is fittest for counsel : I have other designs upon women than eating and drinking with them ; I am in love with *Sparkish's* mistress, whom he is to marry to morrow : now how shall I get her ?

Enter Sparkish looking about.

Horn. Why, here comes one will help you to her.

Harc. He ! he, I tell you is my rival, and will hinder my love.

Horn. No ; a foolish rival and a jealous husband assist their rival's designs ; for they are sure to make their women hate them, which is the first step to their love for another man.

Harc. But I cannot come near his mistress, but in his company.

Horn. Still the better for you ; for fools are most easily cheated when they themselves are accessaries : and he is to be bubbled of his mistress as of his money, the common mistress, by keeping him company.

Spark. Who is that, that is to be bubbled ? faith, let me snack ; I han't met with a bubble since christmas. 'Gad, I think bubbles are like their brother woodcocks, go out with the cold weather.

Harc. A pox, he did not hear all I hope.

(Apart to Horner.)

Spark. Come, you bubbling rogues you, where do we sup — oh, *Harcourt*, my mistress tells me you have been

been making fierce love to her all the play long: ha, ha———but I———

Harc. I make love to her!

Spark. Nay, I forgive thee; for I think I know thee, and I know her; but I am sure I know my self.

Harc. Did she tell you so? I see all women are like these of the *Exchange*; who, to enhance the price of their commodities, report to their fond customers offers which were never made 'em.

Horn. Ay, women are as apt to tell before the Intrigue, as men after it, and to shew themselves the vainer sex. But hast thou a mistress, *Sparkish*? 'tis as hard for me to believe it, as that thou ever hadst a bubble, as you bragg'd just now.

Spark. O, your servant, sir: are you at your raillery, sir? but we are some of us before-hand with you to day at the play: the wits were something bold with you, sir; did you not hear us laugh?

Harc. Yes; but I thought you had gone to plays, to laugh at the poet's wit, not at your own.

Spark. Your servant, sir; no, I thank you. 'Gad I go to a play, as to a country-treat: I carry my own wife to one, and my own wit to t'other, or else I'm sure I shou'd not be merry at either: and the reason why we are so often louder than the players, is because we think we speak more wit, and so becomes the poets rivals in his audience: for to tell you the truth, we hate silly rogues; nay, so much, that we find fault even with their bawdy upon the stage, whilst we talk nothing else in the pit as loud.

Horn. But why should'st thou hate the silly poets? thou hast too much wit to be one; and they, like whores, are only hated by each other: and thou dost scorn writing, I'm sure.

Spark. Yes; I'd have you to know I scorn writing: but women! women, that make men do all foolish things, make 'em write songs too. Every body does it: 'tis e'en as common with lovers as playing with fans; and you can no more help rhyming to your *Phillis*, than drinking to your *Phillis*.

Harc. Nay, poetry in love is no more to be avoided than jealousy.

Dor.

Dor. But the poets damn'd your songs, did they?

Spark. Damn the poets; they have turn'd 'em into burlesque, as they call it: that burlesque is a *Hocus-pocus* trick they have got, which, by the virtue of *Hiclius doctius*, *topsey turvey*, they make a wise and witty man in the world, a fool upon the stage you know not how: and 'tis therefore I hate 'em too, for I know not but it may be my own case; for they'll put a man into a play for looking a-squint. Their predecessors were contented to make serving men only their stage-fools: but these rogues must have gentlemen, with a pox to 'em, nay, Knights; and, indeed, you shall not see a fool upon the stage, but he's a knight. And to tell you the truth, they have kept me these six years from being a knight in earnest, for fear of being knighted in a play and dubb'd a fool.

Dor. Blame 'em not, they must follow their copy, the age.

Harc. But why shouldst thou be afraid of being in a play, who expose your self every day in the play-houses, and at publick places?

Horn. 'Tis but being on the stage, instead of standing on a bench in the pit.

Dor. Don't you give money to painters to draw you like? and are you afraid of your pictures at length in play-houses, where all your mistresses may see you?

Spark. A pox, painters don't draw the small pox or pimples in one's face. Come, damn all your silly authors whatever, all books and booksellers, by the world; and all readers, courteous or uncourteous.

Harc. But who comes here, *Sparkish*?

Enter Mr. Pinchwife, and his wife in man's cloaths. Alithea, Lucy her maid.

Spark. Oh hide me: there's my mistress too (*Sparkish hides himself behind Harcourt.*)

Harc. She sees you.

Spark. But I will not see her: 'tis time to go to *White-hall*, and I must not fail the drawing-room.

Harc. Pray, first carry me, and reconcile me to her.

Spark. Another time: faith, the king will have supp'd.

Harc.

Harc. Not with the worse stomach for thy absence : thou art one of those fools that think their attendance at the king's meals as necessary as his physicians, when you are more troublesome to him than his Doctors, or his dogs.

Spark. Pshaw, I know my interest, sir ; prithee hide me.

Horn. Your servant, *Pinchwife*, —what he knows us not—

Mr. Pinch. Come along. (To his wife aside.

Mrs. Pinch. Pray, have you any ballads ? give me six penny worth.

Clasp. We have no ballads.

Mrs. Pinch. Then give me *Covent-Garden* drollery, and a play or two—oh, here's *Tarugos Wiles*, and the *Slighted Maiden* ; I'll have them.

Mr. Pinch. No ; plays are not for your reading : come along ; will you discover your self ?

(Apart to her.

Horn. Who is that pretty youth with him *Sparkish* ?

Spark. I believe his wife's brother, because he's something like her : but I never saw her but once.

Horn. Extremely handsome ; I have seen a face like it too. Let us follow 'em.

(Exeunt *Pinchwife*, *Mrs. Pinchwife*, *Alithea*,
Lucy ; *Horner* ; *Dorilant* following them.

Harc. Come, *Sparkish*, your mistress saw you, and will be angry you go not to her : besides, I shou'd fain be reconcil'd to her, which none but you can do, dear friend.

Spark. Well, that's a better reason, dear friend : I wou'd not go near her now for hers or my own sake ; but I can deny you nothing : for tho' I have known thee a great while, never go, if I do not love thee as well as a new acquaintance.

Harc. I am oblig'd to you indeed, dear friend : I wou'd be well with her, only to be well with thee still ; for these ties to wives usually dissolves all ties to friends. I wou'd be contented she shou'd enjoy you a nights, but I wou'd have you to my self a days as I have had, dear friend.

Spark.

Spark. And thou shalt enjoy me a days, dear, dear friend, never stir; and I'll be divorced from her, sooner than from thee: come along——

Harc. So, we are hard put to't, when we make our rival our procurer; but neither she nor her brother, wou'd let me come near her now: when all's done, a rival is the best cloak to steal to a mistress under, without suspicion; and when we have once got to her as we desire, we throw him off like other cloaks. (*Aside.*

(*Exit Sparkish, and Harcourt following him.*

Re-enter Mr. Pinchwife, Mrs. Pinchwife in man's cloaths.

Mr. Pinch. Sister, if you will not go, we must leave you—— (*To Alithea.*

The fool her gallant and she will muster up all the young saunterers of this place, and they will leave their dear sempstresses to follow us: what a swarm of cuckolds and cuckold-makers are here? (*Aside.*

Come, let's be gone, mistress *Margery.*

Mrs. Pinch. Don't you believe that I han't half my belly full of fights yet?

Mr. Pinch. Then walk this way.

Mrs. Pinch. Lord, what a power of brave signs are here? stay——the bull's head, the ram's head, and the stag's head, dear——

Mr. Pinch. Nay, if every husband's proper sign here were visible, they wou'd be all alike.

Mrs. Pinch. What d'ye mean by that, bud?

Mr. Pinch. 'Tis no matter——no matter, bud.

Mrs. Pinch. Pray tell me: nay I will know.

Mr. Pinch. They wou'd be all bulls, stags, and rams-heads. (*Exeunt Mr. Pinchwife, Mrs. Pinchwife.*

Re-enter Sparkish, Harcourt, Alithea, Lucy, at t'other door.

Spark. Come, dear madam, for my sake you shall be reconcil'd to him.

Alithea. For your sake I hate him.

Harc. That's something too cruel, madam, to hate me for his sake.

Spark. Ay, indeed, madam, too, too cruel to me, to hate my friend for my sake.

Alithea. Ay, I hate him because he is your enemy; and you ought to hate him too, for making love to me, if you love me.

Spark.

Spark. That's a good one! I hate a man for loving you! If he did love you, 'tis but what he can't help; and 'tis your fault, not his, if he admires you. I hate a man for being of my opinion! I'll ne'er do't, by the world.

Alib. Is it for your honour, or mine, to suffer a man to make love to me, who are to marry you to-morrow?

Spark. Is it for your honour, or mine, to have me jealous? that he makes love to you, is a sign you are handsome; and that I am not jealous, is a sign you are virtuous: that I think is for your honour.

Alib. But 'tis your honour too, I am concerned for.

Harc. But why, dearest madam, will you be more concern'd for his honour than he's himself? let his honour alone, for my sake and his. He, he has no honour——

Spark. How's that?

Harc. But what, my dear friend can guard himself.

Spark. O ho——that's right again.

Harc. Your care of his honour argues his neglect of it, which is no honour to my dear friend here: therefore once more, let his honour go which way it will, dear madam.

Spark. Ay, ay; were it for my honour to marry a woman whose virtue I suspected, and cou'd not trust her in a friend's hands?

Alib. Are you not afraid to lose me?

Harc. He afraid to lose you, madam! no, no—— you may see how the most estimable and most glorious creature in the world is valued by him: will you not see it?

Spark. Right, honest *Frank*, I have that noble value for her, that I cannot be jealous of her.

Alib. You mistake him: he means you care not for me, nor who has me.

Spark. Lord, madam, I see you are jealous: will you wrest a poor man's meaning from his words?

Alib. You astonish me, sir, with your want of jealousy.

Spark. And you make me giddy, madam, with your jealousy and fears, and virtue and honour: 'gad, I say
virtue

vertue makes a woman as troublesome as a little reading or learning.

Alith. Monstrous!

Lucy. Well, to see what easy husbands these women of quality can meet with! a poor chamber maid can never have such lady-like-luck. Besides he's thrown away upon her: she'll make no use of her fortune, her blessing, none to a gentleman, for a pure cuckold; for it requires good breeding to be a cuckold. (*Behind.*

Alith. I tell you then plainly, he pursues me to marry me.

Spark. Pshaw.

Harc. Come, madam, you see you strive in vain to make him jealous for me: my dear friend is the kindest creature in the world to me.

Spark. Poor fellow.

Harc. But his kindness only is not enough for me, without your favour, your good opinion, dear madam: 'tis that must perfect my happiness. Good gentleman, he believes all I say; wou'd you wou'd do so. Jealous of me! I wou'd not wrong him or you for the world.

Spark. Look you there: hear him, hear him, and do not walk away so. (*Alithea walks carelessly to and fro.*

Harc. I love you, madam, so——

Spark. How's that! nay — now you begin to go too far indeed.

Harc. So much, I confess, I say, I love you, that I wou'd not have you miserable, and cast your self away upon so unworthy and inconsiderable a thing, as what you see here.

(*Clapping his hand on his breast, points at Sparkish.*

Spark. No, faith, I believe thou wou'd'st not, now his meaning is plain; but I knew before thou wou'd'st not wrong me, nor her.

Harc. No, no, heavens forbid the glory of her sex shou'd fall so low, as into the embraces of such a contemptible wretch, the least of mankind——my dear friend here—I injure him. (*Embracing Sparkish.*

Alith. Very well.

Spark. No, no, dear friend, I knew it: madam you see he will rather wrong himself than me, in giving himself such names.

Alith.

Alib. Do not you understand him yet?

Spark. Yes how modestly he speaks of himself, poor fellow!

Alib. Methinks he speaks impudently of your self, since — before your self too: infomuch that I can no longer suffer his scurrilous abusiveness to you, no more than his love to me. *(Offers to go.)*

Spark. Nay, nay, madam, pray stay, his love to you! lord, madam, has he not spoke yet plain enough?

Alib. Yes indeed, I shou'd think so.

Spark. Well then, by the world, a man can't speak civilly to a woman now, but presently she says, he makes love to her: nay, madam, you shall stay, with your pardon, since you have not yet understood him, till he has made an eclairsifment of his love to you, that is, what kind of love it is: answer to thy catechism, friend; do you love my mistress here?

Harc. Yes, I wish she wou'd not doubt it.

Spark. But how do you love her?

Harc. With all my soul.

Alib. I thank him, methinks he speaks plain enough now.

Spark. You are out still.

(To Alitheas.)

But with what kind of love, *Harcourt*?

Harc. With the best, and the truest love in the world.

Spark. Look you there then, that is with no matrimonial love, I'm sure.

Alib. How's that? do you say matrimonial love is not best?

Spark. 'Gad, I went too far e'er I was aware: but speak for thy self, *Harcourt*, you said you wou'd not wrong me, nor her.

Harc. No, no, madam, e'en take him for Heaven's sake.

Spark. Look you there, madam.

Harc. Who shou'd in all justice be yours, he that loves you most. *(Claps his hand on his breast.)*

Alib. Look you there, Mr. *Sparkish*, who's that?

Spark. Who shou'd it be? go on, *Harcourt*.

Harc. Who loves you more than women titles, or fortune fools.

(Points at Sparkish.)

Spark.

Spark. Look you there, he means me still, for he points at me.

Alib. Ridiculous!

Harc. Who can only match your faith, and constancy in love.

Spark. Ay.

Harc. Who knows, if it be possible, how to value so much beauty and virtue.

Spark. Ay.

Harc. Whose love can no more be equall'd in the world, than that heavenly form of yours.

Spark. No——

Harc. Who cou'd no more suffer a rival, than your absence, and yet cou'd no more suspect your virtue, than his own constancy in his love to you.

Spark. No——

Harc. Who, in fine, loves you better than his eyes, that first made him love.

Spark. Ay —nay, madam, faith you shan't go, till——

Alib. Have a care lest you make me stay too long——

Spark. But till he has saluted you; that I may be assured you are friends, after his honest advice and declaration: come, pray, madam, be friends with him.

Enter Master Pinchwife, Mistress Pinchwife.

Alib. You must pardon me, sir, that I am not yet so obedient to you.

Mr. Pinch. What, invite your wife to kiss men? monstrous! are you not ashamed? I will never forgive you.

Spark. Are you not ashamed, that I shou'd have more confidence in the chastity of your family, than you have; you must not teach me, I am a man of honour, sir, though I am frank and free; I am frank, sir——

Mr. Pinch. Very frank, sir, to share your wife with your friends.

Spark. He is an humble, menial friend, such as reconciles the differences of the marriage bed; you know, man and wife do not always agree, I design him for that use, therefore wou'd have him well with my wife.

Mr. Pinch. A menial friend——you will get a great many menial friends, by shewing your wife as you do.

Spark. What then? It may be I have a pleasure in't, as I have to shew fine cloaths at a play-house, the first day, and count money before poor rogues. Mr.

Mr. Pinch. He that shews his wife, or money, will be in eanger of having them borrowed sometimes.

Spark. I love to be envy'd, and wou'd not marry a wife, that I alone cou'd love; loving alone is as dull as eating alone: Is it not a frank age? and I am a frank person; and to tell you the truth it may be, I love to have rivals in a wife, they make her seem to a man still but as a kept mistress; and so good night, for I must to *Whitehall*. Madam, I hope you are now reconcil'd to my friend; and so I wish you a good night, madam, and sleep if you can; for to morrow you know I must visit you early with a canonical gentleman. Good night, dear *Harcourt*. (Exit Sparkish.

Harc. Madam, I hope you will not refuse my visit to morrow, if it shou'd be earlier with a canonical gentleman, than Mr. *Sparkish's*.

Mr. Pinch. This gentlewoman is yet under my care, therefore you must yet forbear your freedom with her, fir. (Coming between Alithea and Harcourt.

Harc. Must, fir.

Mr. Pinch. Yes, fir, she is my sister.

Harc. 'Tis well she is, fir, — for I must be her servant, fir. Madam——

Mr. Pinch. Come away, sister, we had been gone, if it had not been for you, and so avoided these leud rake-hells, who seem to haunt us.

Enter Horner, Dorilant to them.

Horn. How now! *Pinchwife*!

Mr. Pinch. Your servant.

Horn. What, I see a little time in the country makes a man turn wild and unfociable, and only fir to converse with his horses, dogs, and his herds.

Mr. Pinch. I have business, fir, and must mind it; your business is pleasure, therefore you and I must go different ways.

Horn. Well, you may go on; but this pritty young gentleman—— (Takes hold of Mrs. Pinchwife.

Harc. The lady——

Dor. And the maid——

Horn. Shall stay with us, for I suppose their business is the same with ours, pleasure.

Mr. Pinch. 'Sdeath, he knows her, she carries it so fillily;

fillily ; yet if he does not, I shou'd be more fillily to discover it first. (Aside.)

Alib. Pray, let us go, sir.

Mr. Pinch. Come, come——

Horn. Had you not rather stay with us ?

(To *Mrs. Pinchwife.*)

Prithee Pinchwife, who is this pretty young gentleman ?

Mr. Pinch. One to whom I'm a guardian. I wish I could keep her out of your hands—— (Aside.)

Horn. Who is he ? I never saw any thing so pretty in all my life.

Mr. Pinch. Pshaw, do not look upon him so much, he's a poor bashful youth, you'll put him out of countenance. Come away, brother.

(Offers to take her away.)

Horn. O, your brother ?

Mr. Pinch. Yes, my wife's brother ; come, come, she'll stay supper for us.

Horn. I thought so, for he is very like her I saw you at the play with, whom I told you I was in love with.

Mrs. Pinch. O jeminy ! is that he that was in love with me, I am glad on't I vow, for he's a curious fine gentleman, and I love him already too. (Aside.)

Is this he bud ?

(To *Mr. Pinchwife.*)

Mr. Pinch. Come away, come away. (To his Wife.)

Horn. Why, what haste are you in ? why won't you let me talk with him ?

Mr. Pinch. Because you'll debauch him, he's yet young and innocent, and I wou'd not have him debauched for any thing in the world.

How she gazes on him ! the devil—— (Aside.)

Horn. Harcourt, Dorilant, look you here, this is the likeness of that dowdy he told us of, his wife, did you ever see a lovelier creature ? The rogue has reason to be jealous of his Wife, since she is like him, for she wou'd make all that see her, in love with her.

Harc. And as I remember now, she is as like him here as can be.

Dor. She is indeed very pretty, if she be like him.

Horn. Very pretty, a very pretty commendation——
She is a glorious creature, beautifull beyond all things I ever beheld. *Mr. Pinch.*

Mr. Pinch. So, so.

Harc. More beautiful than a poet's first mistress of imagination.

Horn. Or another man's last mistress of flesh and blood.

Mrs. Pinch. Nay, now you jeer, sir; pray don't jeer me——

Mr. Pinch. Come, come. (By heavens, she'll discover her self.) (Aside

Horn. I speak of your sister, sir.

Mr. Pinch. Ay, but saying she was handsome, if like him, made him blush. (I am upon a wrack —— (Aside.

Horn. Methinks he is so handsome, he shou'd not be a man.

Mr. Pinch. O there 'tis out, he has discover'd her, I am not able to suffer any longer. (Come, come away, I say—— (To his wife.

Horn. Nay, by your leave, sir, he shall not go yet——
Harcourt, Dorilant, let us torment this jealous rogue a little. (To them.

Harc. } How?
Dor. }

Horn. I'll shew you.

Mr. Pinch. Come, pray let him go, I cannot stay fooling any longer; I tell you his sister stays supper for us.

Horn. Do's she? come then, we'll all go sup with her and thee.

Mr. Pinch. No, now I think on't, having stay'd so long for us, I warrant she's gone to bed——

(I wish she and I were well out of their hands——

(Aside.

Come, I must rise early to morrow, come.

Horn. Well then, if she be gone to bed, I wish her and you a good night. But pray, young gentleman, present my humble service to her.

Mrs. Pinch. Thank you heartily, sir.

Mr. Pinch. 'Sdeath, she will discover her self yet in spite of me. (Aside.

He is something more civil to you, for your kindness to his sister, than I am it seems,

Horn. Tell, dear sweet little gentleman, for all your brother there, that you have reviv'd the love I had for her at first sight in the play-house.

Mrs. Pinch. But did you love her indeed, and indeed?

Mr. Pinch. So, so.

[*Aside.*

Away, I say.

Horn. Nay, stay; yes indeed, and indeed, pray do you tell her so, and give her this kiss from me.

[*Kisses her.*

Mr. Pinch. O heavens what do I suffer! now 'tis too plain he knows her, and yet——

[*Aside.*

Horn. And this, and this——

(*Kisses her again.*

Mrs. Pinch. What do you kiss me for, I am no woman.

Mr. Pinch. So there——'tis out.

[*Aside.*

Come, I cannot, nor will stay any longer.

Horn. Nay, they shall send your lady a kiss too; here, *Harcourt*, *Dorilant*, will you not? (They kiss her.

Mr. Pinch. How! do I suffer this? Was I not accusing another just now, for this rascally patience, in permitting his wife to be kiss'd before his face? ten thousand ulcers gnaw away their lips.

[*Aside.*

Come, come.

Horn. Good night, dear little gentleman; madam, good night; farewell, *Pinchwife*.

(Did not I tell you I wou'd raise his jealous gall?)

(*Apart to Harcourt, and Dorilant.*

(*Exeunt Horner, Harcourt, and Dorilant.*

Mr. Pinch. So, they are gone at last; stay, let me see first if the coach be at this door.

[*Exit.*

Horn. What, not gone yet? will you be sure to do as I desired you, sweet sir?

(*Horner, Harcourt, Dorilant returns.*

Mrs. Pinch. Sweet sir, but what will you give me then?

Horn. Any thing, come away into the next walk.

(*Exit Horner, halting away Mrs. Pinchwife.*

Alith. Hold, hold,——what d'ye do?

Lucy. Stay, stay, hold——

Harc. Hold, madam, hold, let him present him, he'll come presently; nay, I will never let you go, till you answer my Question.

Lucy.

Lucy. For God's sake, sir, I must follow 'em.

(Alith. Lucy, *struggling with Harcourt and Doril.*

Dor. No, I have something to present you with too, you shan't follow them.

Pinchwife *returns.*

Mr. Pinch. Where? —how—what's become of?—gone—whither?

Lucy. He's only gone with the gentlemen, who will give him something, an't please your worship.

Mr. Pinch. Something— give him something, with a pox—where are they?

Alith. In the next walk only, brother.

Mr. Pinch. Only, only; where, where?

(Exit Pinchwife, and returns presently, then goes out again.

Harc. What's the matter with him? why so much concern'd? but dearest madam—

Alith. Pray let me go, sir, I have said and suffered enough already.

Harc. Then you will not look upon, nor pity my sufferings?

Alith. To look upon 'em, when I cannot help 'em, were cruelty, not pity; therefore I will never see you more.

Harc. Let me then, Madam, have my privilege of a banish'd lover, complaining or railing, and giving you but a farewell reason; why, if you cannot condescend to marry me, you shou'd not take that wretch my rival.

Alith. He only, not you, since my honour is engaged so far to him, can give me a reason, why I shou'd not marry him; but if he be true, and what I think him to me, I must be so to him; your servant, sir.

Harc. Have women only constancy when 'tis a vice, and are, like fortune, only true to fools?

Dor. Thou sha't not stir, thou robust creature, you see I can deal with you, therefore you shou'd stay the rather, and be kind.

[To Lucy, who struggles to get from him,
Enter Pinchwife.

Mr. Pinch. Gone, gone, not to be found; quite gone

gone, ten thousand plagues go with 'em ; which way went they ?

Alith. But into t'other walk, brother.

Lucy. their Business will be done presently, sure, an't please your worship, it can't be long in doing I'm sure on't.

Alith. Are they not there ?

Mr. Pinch. No, you know where they are, you infamous wretch, eternal shame of your family, which you do not dishonour enough your self, you think, but you must help her to do it too, thou legion of bands.

Alith. Good brother.

Mr. Pinch. Damn'd, damn'd sister.

Alith. Look you here, she's coming.

Enter Mrs. Pinchwife in man's clothes, running with her hat under her arm, full of oranges and dry'd fruit, Horner following.

Mrs. Pinch. O dear bud, look you here what I have got, see.

Mr. Pinch. And what I have got here too, which you can't see. [*Aside rubbing his forehead.*]

Mrs. Pinch. The fine gentleman has given me better things yet.

Mr. Pinch. Has he so ? (Out of breath and colour'd — I must hold yet) [*Aside.*]

Horn. I have only given your little brother an orange, sir.

Mr. Pinch. Thank you, sir. (To Horner. You have only squeez'd my orange, I suppose, and given it me again ; yet I must have a city-patience. (*Aside.* Come, come away — (To his Wife.

Mrs. Pinch. Stay, till I have put up my fine things, bud.

Enter sir Jasper Fidget.

Sir Jasp. O master Horner, come, come, the ladies stay for you ; your mistress, my wife, wonders you make not more haste to her.

Horn. I have staid this half hour for you here, and 'tis your fault I am not now with your wife.

Sir Jasp. But pray, don't let her know so much ; the truth on't is, I was advancing a certain project to his majesty, about — I'll tell you.

Horn.

Horn. No, let's go, and hear it at your house: good night, sweet little gentleman; one kiss more, you'll remember me now, I hope. *(Kisses her.)*

Dor. What, sir *Jasper*, will you separate friends? he promis'd to sup with us, and if you take him to your house, you'll be in danger of our company too.

Sir Jasp. Alas, gentlemen, my house is not fit for you, there are none but civil women there, which are not for your turn; he you know can bear with the society of civil women now, ha, ha, ha; besides he's one of my family; — he's — he, he, he.

Dor. What is he?

Sir Jasp. Faith my eunuch, since you'll have it; he, he, he. *(Exit sir Jasper Fidget and Horner.)*

Dor. I rather wish thou wert his or my cuckold: *Harcourt*, what a good cuckold is lost there, for want of a man to make him one; thee and I cannot have *Horner's* privilege, who can make use of it.

Harc. Ay, to poor *Horner*, 'tis like coming to an estate at threescore, when a man can't be the better for't.

Mr. Pinch. Come.

Mrs. Pinch. Presently, bud.

Dor. Come, let us go too: madam, your servant. *(To Alithea.)*

Good night, strapper —

(To Lucy.)

Harc. Madam, though you will not let me have a good day, or night, I wish you one; but dare not name the other half of my wish.

Alith. Good night, sir, for ever.

Mrs. Pinch. I don't know where to put this here, dear bud, you shall eat it; nay, you shall have part of the fine gentleman's good things, or treat as you call it, when we come home.

Mr. Pinch. Indeed, I deserve it, since I furnish'd the best part of it. *(Strikes away the orange.)*

*The gallant treats presents, and gives the ball;
But 'tis the absent cuckold pays for all.*

ACT IV. SCENE. I.

*In Pinchwife's House in the Morning.**Lucy, Alithea dress'd in new Clothes.**Lucy.*

WELL—madam, now have I dress'd you, and set you out with so many ornaments, and spent upon you ounces of essence and pulvillio; and all this for no other purpose; but as people adorn and perfume a corps for a stinking second hand grave? such, or as bad, I think master *Sparkish's* bed.

Alith. Hold your peace.

Lucy. Nay, madam, I will ask you the reason, why you wou'd banish poor master *Harcourt* for ever from your sight; how cou'd you be so hard-hearted?

Alith. 'Twas because I was not hard-hearted.

Lucy. No, no; 'twas stark love and kindness, I warrant.

Alith. It was so; I wou'd see him no more, because I love him.

Lucy. Hey day, a very pretty reason!*Alith.* You do not understand me.*Lucy.* I wish you may your self.

Alith. I was engag'd to marry, you see, another man, whom my justice will not suffer me to deceive, or injure.

Lucy. Can there be a greater cheat, or wrong done to a man, than to give him your person, without your heart; I shou'd make a conscience of it.

Alith. I'll retrieve it for him, after I am married a while.

Lucy. The woman that marries to love better, will be as much mistaken, as the wench that marries to live better. No, madam, marrying to encrease love, is like gaming to become rich; alas, you only lose what little stock you had before.

Alith. I find by your rhetorick you have been brib'd to betray me.

Lucy. Only by his merit, that has brib'd your heart
yon

you see against your word, and rigid honour ; but what a devil is this honour ? 'tis sure a disease in the head, like the megrim or falling-sickness, that always hurries people away to do themselves mischief ; men lose their lives by it ; women, what's dearer to 'em, their love, the life of life.

Alith. Come, pray talk you no more of honour, nor master *Harcourt* ; I wish the other wou'd come to secure my fidelity to him, and his right in me.

Lucy. You will marry him then ?

Alith. Certainly, I have given him already my word, and will my hand too, to make it good, when he comes.

Lucy. Well, I wish I may never stick pin more, if he be not an errant natural, to t'other fine gentleman.

Alith. I own he wants the wit of *Harcourt*, which I will dispence withal, for another want he has, which is want of jealousy, which men of wit seldom want.

Lucy. Lord, madam, what shou'd you do with a fool to your husband ? you intend to be honest, don't you ? then that husbandly virtue, credulity, is thrown away upon you.

Alith. He only that could suspect my virtue, shou'd have cause to do it ; 'tis *Sparkish's* confidence in my truth that obliges me to be so faithful to him.

Lucy. You are not sure his opinion may last.

Alith. I am satisfied, 'tis impossible for him to be jealous, after the proofs I have had of him : jealousy in a husband, heaven defend me from it ; it begets a thousand plagues to a poor woman, the loss of her honour, her quiet, and her——

Lucy. And her pleasure.

Alith. What d'ye mean, impertinent ?

Lucy. Liberty is a great pleasure, madam.

Alith. I say loss of her honour, her quiet, nay, her life sometimes ; and what's as bad almost, the loss of this town, that is, she is sent into the country, which is the last ill usage of a husband to a wife, I think.

Lucy. O does the wind lie there ? *[Aside.]*
Then of necessity, madam, you think a man must carry his wife into the country, if he be wise ; the country is as terrible I find to our young *English* ladies, as a monastery to those abroad ; and on my vir-
gini-

ginity, I think they would rather marry a *London* goaler, than a high sheriff of a county, since neither can stir from his employment: formerly women of wit married fools, for a great estate, a fine seat, or the like, but now 'tis for a pretty seat only in *Lincolns-Inn-Fields*, *St. James-Fields*, or the *Pall-Mall*.

Enter to them Sparkish, and Harcourt dress'd like a parson.

Spark. Madam, your humble servant, a happy day to you, and to us all.

Harc. Amen.

Alith. Who have we here?

Spark. My chaplain, faith——O madam, poor *Harcourt* remembers his humble service to you; and in obedience to your last commands, refrains coming unto your sight.

Alith. Is not that he?

Spark. No, fie, no; but to shew that he ne'er intended to hinder our match, has sent his brother here to join our hands: when I get me a wife, I must get her a chaplain, according to the custom; this is his brother, and my chaplain.

Alith. His brother!

Lucy. And your chaplain, to preach in your pulpit then——*[Aside.*

Alith. His brother!

Spark. Nay, I know you wou'd not believe it: I told you, sir, she wou'd take you for your brother *Frank*.

Alith. Believe it!

Lucy. His brother! ha, ha, he; he has a trick left still, it seems——*[Aside.*

Spark. Come, my dearest, pray let us go to church before the canonical hour is past.

Alith. For shame! you are abus'd still.

Spark. By the world, 'tis strange now you are so incredulous.

Alith. 'Tis strange you are so credulous.

Spark. Dearest of my life, hear me: I tell you this is *Ned Harcourt* of *Cambridge*, by the world; you see he has a sneaking college look. 'Tis true, he's something like his brother *Frank*; and they differ from each other no more than in their age, for they were twins.

Lucy.

Lucy. Ha, ha, he.

Alib. Your servant, fir ; I cannot be so deceiv'd, tho' you are : but come, let's hear, how do you know what you affirm so confidently ?

Spark. Why, I'll tell you all : *Frank Harcourt* coming to me this morning to wish me joy, and present his service to you, I ask'd him, if he could help me to a parson. Whereupon he told me, he had a brother in town who was in orders ; and he went strait away, and sent him, you see there, to me.

Alib. Yes, *Frank* goes and puts on a black coat, then tells you he is *Ned* ; that's all you have for't.

Spark. Pshaw, pshaw ; I tell you, by the same token, the midwife put her garter about *Frank's* neck, to know 'em asunder, they were so like.

Alib. *Frank* tells you this too ?

Spark. Ay, and *Ned* there too : nay, they are both in a story.

Alib. So, so ; very foolish.

Spark. Lord, if you won't believe one, you had best try him by your chamber-maid there ; for chamber-maids must needs know chaplains from other men, they are so us'd to 'em.

Lucy. Let's see : nay, I'll be sworn he has the canonical smirk, and the filthy clammy palm of a chaplain.

Alib. Well, most reverend doctor, pray let us make an end of this fooling.

Harc. With all my soul, divine heavenly creature, when you please.

Alib. He speaks like a chaplain indeed.

Spark. Why was there not soul, divine, heavenly, in what he said ?

Alib. Once more, most impertinent black coat, cease your persecution, and let us have a conclusion of this ridiculous love.

Harc. I had forgot ; I must suit my stile to my coat, or I wear it in vain.

[Aside.]

Alib. I have no more patience left ; let us make once an end of this troublesome love, I say.

Harc. So be it, seraphick lady, when your honour shall think it meet and convenient so to do.

Spark. 'Gad I'm sure none but a chaplain cou'd speak so, I think.

Alib.

Alith. Let me tell you, sir, this dull trick will not serve your turn ; tho' you delay our marriage, you shall not hinder it.

Harc. Far be it from me, munificent patroness, to delay your marriage : I desire nothing more than to marry you presently ; which I might do if you your self would ; for my noble good-natur'd and thrice-generous patron here wou'd not hinder it.

Spark. No, poor man, not I, faith.

Harc. And now, madam, let me tell you plainly, no body else shall marry you : by heavens, I'll die first ; for I'm sure I shou'd die after it.

Lucy. How his love has made him forget his function, as I have seen it in real parsons!

Alith. That was spoken like a chaplain too : now you understand him, I hope ?

Spark. Poor man, he takes it heinously to be refus'd ; I can't blame him : 'tis putting an indignity upon him not to be suffer'd. But you'll pardon me, madam, it shan't be ; he shall marry us. Come away, pray madam.

Lucy. Ha, ha, he, more ado ! 'tis late.

Alith. Invincible stupidity ! I tell you, he wou'd marry me as your rival, not as your chaplain.

Spark. Come, come, madam. (*Pulling her away.*)

Lucy. I pray, madam, do not refuse this reverend divine the honour and satisfaction of marrying you : for I dare say, he has set his heart upon't, good doctor.

Alith. What can you hope or design by this ?

Harc. I cou'd answer her : a reprieve for a day only, often revokes a hasty doom. At worst, if she will not take mercy on me, and let me marry her, I have at least the lover's second pleasure ; hindring my rival's enjoyment, tho' but for a time. [*Aside.*]

Spark. Come, madam, 'tis e'en twelve a clock : and my mother charg'd me never to be married out of the canonical hours. Come, come ; lord, here's such a deal of modesty, I warrant, the first day.

Lucy. Yes, an't please your worship, marry'd women shew all their modesty the first day, because married men shew all their love the first day.

(*Exeunt Sparkish, Alithea, Harcourt, and Lucy.*)

The

The SCENE changes to a bed-chamber; where appear
Pinchwife and Mrs. Pinchwife.

Mr. Pinch. Come tell me, I say.

Mrs. Pinch. Lord, han't I told it a hundred times
over.

Mr. Pinch. I wou'd try, if in the repetition of the
ungrateful tale, I cou'd find her altering it in the least
circumstance: for if her story be false, she is so too.
(*Aside.* Come, how was't, baggage?

Mrs. Pinch. Lord, what Pleasure you take to hear
it, sure!

Mr. Pinch. No, you take more in telling it, I find;
but speak, how was't?

Mrs. Pinch. He carried me up into the house, next
to the Exchange.

Mr. Pinch. So, and you two were only in the room?

Mrs. Pinch. Yes; for he sent away a youth that was
there for some dried fruit, and China oranges.

Mr. Pinch. Did he so? damn him for it—— and
for——

Mrs. Pinch. But presently came up the gentlewoman
of the house.

Mr. Pinch. O, 'twas well she did: but what did he
do whilst the fruit came?

Mrs. Pinch. He kiss'd me a hundred times, and told
me he fancied he kiss'd my fine sifter, meaning me, you
know, whom, he said, he lov'd with all his soul; and
bid me be sure to tell her so, and to desire her to be
at her window by eleven of the clock this morning,
and he wou'd walk under it at that time.

Mr. Pinch. And he was as good as his word, very
punctual: a pox reward him for't. (*Aside.*

Mrs. Pinch. Well; and he said, if you were not with-
in, he wou'd come up to her, meaning me, you know,
bud, still.

Mr. Pinch. So—— he knew her certainly; but for
this confession, I am oblig'd to her simplicity. (*Aside.*
But what, you stood very still when he kiss'd you?

Mrs. Pinch. Yes, I warrant you; wou'd you have
had me discover'd my self?

Mr. Pinch. But you told me, he did some beastliness
to you, as you call it; what was't?

Mrs. Pinch.

Mrs. Pinch. Why, he put——

Mr. Pinch. What ?

Mrs. Pinch. Why, he put the tip of his tongue between my lips, and so muffled me——and I said, I'd bite it.

Mr. Pinch. An eternal canker seize it, for a dog.

Mrs. Pinch. Nay, you need not be so angry with him neither ; for to say the truth, he has the sweetest breath I ever knew.

Mr. Pinch. The devil—— you were satisfied with it then, and wou'd do it again ?

Mrs. Pinch. Not unless he shou'd force me.

Mr. Pinch. Force you, changeling ! I tell you no woman can be forc'd.

Mrs. Pinch. Yes, but she may sure, by such a one as he ; for he's a proper, goodly, strong man : 'tis hard, let me tell you, to resist him.

Mr. Pinch. So, 'tis plain she loves him ; yet she has not love enough to make her conceal it from me : but the sight of him will increase her aversion for me, and love for him, and that love instruct her how to deceive me, and satisfy him, all idiot as she is. Love ! 'twas he gave women first their craft, their art of deluding. Out of nature's hands they came plain, open, silly, and fit for slaves, as she and heav'n intended 'em : but dam'd love——well——I must strangle that little monster, whilst I can deal with him.

Go, fetch pen, ink, and paper out of the next room.

Mrs. Pinch. Yes, bud. *(Exit Mrs. Pinchwife.)*

Mr. Pinch. Why shou'd women have more invention in love than men ? it can only be, because they have more desires, more soliciting passions, more lust, and more of the devil. *(Aside.)*

Mrs. Pinchwife returns.

Come, minx, sit down and write.

Mrs. Pinch. Ay, dear bud ; but I can't do't very well.

Mr. Pinch. I wish you cou'd not at all.

Mrs. Pinch. But what shou'd I write for ?

Mr. Pinch. I'll have you write a letter to your lover.

Mrs. Pinch. O lord, to the fine gentleman a letter !

Mr. Pinch. Yes, to the fine gentleman.

Mrs. Pinch. Lord, you do but jeer ; sure you jest.

Mr.

Mr. *Pinch*. I am not so merry : come, write as I bid you.

Mrs. *Pinch*. What, do you think I am a fool ?

Mr. *Pinch*. She's afraid I wou'd not dictate any love to him, therefore she's unwilling. But you had best begin.

Mrs. *Pinch*. Indced, and indeed, but I won't, so I won't.

Mr. *Pinch*. Why ?

Mrs. *Pinch*. Because he's in town; you may send for him, if you will.

Mr. *Pinch*. Very well ; you wou'd have him brought to you : is it come to this ? I say, take the pen, and write, or you'll provoke me.

Mrs. *Pinch*. Lord, what d'ye make a fool of me for ? don't I know that letters are never writ but from the country to *London*, and from *London* into the country ? now he's in town, and I am in town too ; therefore I can't write to him, you know.

Mr. *Pinch*. So, I am glad it is no worse : she is innocent enough yet. *(Aside.*

Yes, you may, when your husband bids you, write letters to people that are in town.

Mrs. *Pinch*. O, may I so ! then I'm satisfied.

Mr. *Pinch*. Come, begin— fir— *(Dictates.*

Mrs. *Pinch*. Shan't I say, dear fir ? you know one says always something more than bare fir.

Mr. *Pinch*. Write as I bid you, or I will write whore with this penknife in your face.

Mrs. *Pinch*. Nay, good bud— fir— *(She writes.*

Mr. *Pinch*. Tho' I suffer'd last night your nauseous loath'd kisses and embraces—write.

Mrs. *Pinch*. Nay, why shou'd I say so ? you know I told you he had a sweet breath.

Mr. *Pinch*. Write.

Mrs. *Pinch*. Let me but put out loath'd.

Mr. *Pinch*. Write, I say.

Mrs. *Pinch*. Well then. *(Writes.*

Mr. *Pinch*. Let's see, what have you writ ? tho' I suffer'd last night your kisses and embraces.

(Takes the paper and reads.

Thou impudent creature, where is nauseous and loath'd ?

Mrs.

Mrs. Pinch. I can't abide to write such filthy words.

Mr. Pinch. Once more write as I'd have you, and question it not, or I will spoil thy writing with this: I will stab out those eyes that cause my mischief.

(*Holds up the Penknife.*)

Mrs. Pinch. O lord, I will.

Mr. Pinch. So——so——let's see now. (*Reads.*
Tho' I suffer'd last night your nauseous loath'd kisses
and embraces. Go on——yet I wou'd not have you
presume that you shall ever repeat them——so——

(*She writes.*)

Mrs. Pinch. I have writ it.

Mr. Pinch. O then——I then conceal'd my self from
your knowledge, to avoid your insolencies——

(*She writes.*)

Mrs. Pinch. So——

Mr. Pinch. The same reason, now I am out of your
hands——

(*She writes.*)

Mrs. Pinch. So——

Mr. Pinch. Makes me own to you my unfortunate,
tho' innocent frolick, of being in man's clothes.

(*She writes.*)

Mrs. Pinch. So——

Mr. Pinch. That you may for evermore cease to pursue
her who hates and detests you. (*She writes on.*)

Mrs. Pinch. So——heh!—— (*Sighs.*)

Mr. Pinch. What do you sigh?——detests you——as
much as she loves her husband and her honour——

Mrs. Pinch. I vow, husband, he'll ne'er believe I
shou'd write such a letter.

Mr. Pinch. What, he'd expect a kinder from you?
come, now your name only.

Mrs. Pinch. What, shan't I say, your most faithful
humble servant till death?

Mr. Pinch. No, tormenting fiend. (*Her stile, I find,*
wou'd be very soft) (*Aside.*)

Come, wrap it up now, whilst I go fetch wax and
candle; and write on the back-side, for Mr. Horner.

(*Exit Pinchwife.*)

Mrs. Pinch. For Mr. Horner——so I am glad he has
told me his name. Dear Mr. Horner; but why shou'd
I send thee such a letter, that will vex thee, and make
thee,

thee angry with me—— well, I will not send it—— ay, but then my husband will kill me—— for I see plainly, he won't let me love Mr. Horner—— but what care I for my husband— I won't, so I won't, send poor Mr. Horner such a letter— but then my husband—but, oh—what if I writ at bottom, my husband made me write it— ay, but then my husband would see't—— can one have no shift? ah, a London woman would have had a hundred presently. Stay— what if I shou'd write a letter, and wrap it up like this, and write upon't too : ay, but then my husband would see't—I don't know what to do— but yet y vads, I'll try, so I will— for I will not send this letter to poor Mr. Horner, come what will on't.

Dear sweet Mr. Horner——sc——

(She writes, and repeats what she hath writ.

My husband would have me send you a base, rude, unmannerly letter—but I won't—so—and would have me forbid you loving me— but I won't—so—and would have me say to you, I hate you, poor Mr. Horner—but I won't tell a lye for him—there—— for I'm sure, if you and I were in the country at cards together—sc—I could not help treading on your toe under the table—so—or rubbing knees with you, and staring in your face till you saw me— very well—— and then looking down, and blushing for an hour together—— so—but I must make haste before my husband comes. And now he has taught me to write letters, you shall have longer ones from me, who am,

Dear, dear, poor dear Mr. Horner,

your most humble friend, and

servant to command, till death,

Margery Pinchwife.

Stay, I must give him a hint at bottom— sc—— now wrap it up just like t'other—so— now, write for Mr. Horner—but oh, now! what shall I do with it? for here comes my husband.

Enter Pinchwife.

Mr. Pinch. I have been detained by a sparkish coxcomb,

comb, who pretended a visit to me; but I fear it was to my wife. *(Aside.)*

What, have you done?

Mrs. Pinch. Ay, ay, bud, just now.

Mr. Pinch. Let's see't; what d'ye tremble for? what, you wou'd not have it go?

Mrs. Pinch. Here——no, I must not give him that.

(He opens and reads the first letter.)

So I had been serv'd, if I had given him this. *(Aside.)*

Mr. Pinch. Come, where's the wax and seal?

Mrs. Pinch. Lord, what shall I do now? nay, then I have it—— *Aside.*

Pray let me see'r.

Lord, you think me so errant a fool, I cannot seal a letter: I will do't, so I will.

(Snatches the letter from him, changes it for the other, seals it, and delivers it to him.)

Mr. Pinch. Nay, I believe you will learn that and other things too, which I wou'd not have you.

Mrs. Pinch. So, han't I done it curiously?

I think I have: there's my letter going to Mr. Horner; since he'll needs have me send letters to folks. *Aside.*

Mr. Pinch. 'Tis very well: but I warrant, you wou'd not have it go now?

Mrs. Pinch. Yes, indeed, but I wou'd, bud, now.

Mr. Pinch. Well, you are a good girl then. Come, let me lock you up in your chamber till I come back; and be sure you come not within three strides of the window when I am gone, for I have a spy in the street.

(Exit Mrs. Pinchwife.)

(Pinchwife locks the door.)

At least, 'tis fit she thinks so: if we do not cheat women, they'll cheat us; and fraud may be justly used with secret enemies, of which a wife is the most dangerous: and he that has a handsome one to keep, and a frontier town, must provide against treachery, rather than open force—now I have secured all within, I'll deal with the foe without, with false intelligence.

(Holds up the letter.)

(Exit Pinchwife.)

The SCENE changes to Horner's lodgings.

Quack and Horner.

Quack. Well, fir, how fadges the new design? have you not the luck of all your brother projectors, to deceive only your self at last?

Horn. No, good *Demine* doctor, I deceive you, it seems, and others too: for the grave matrons, and old rigid husbands, think me as unfit for love as they are; but their wives, sisters, and daughters know, some of 'em, better things already.

Quack. Already!

Horn. Already, I say last night I was drunk with half a dozen of your civil persons, as you call 'em, and people of honour, and was made free of their society and dressing-rooms for ever hereafter; and am already come to the privileges of sleeping upon their pallats, warming smocks, tying shoes and garters, and the like, doctor, already, already, doctor.

Quack. you have made use of your time, fir.

Horn. I tell you I am now no more interruption to 'em when they sing or talk bawdy, than a little squab French page who speaks no English.

Quack. But do civil persons, and women of honour, drink and sing bawdy songs?

Horn. O, amongst friends, amongst friends: for your bigots in honour are just like those in religion: they fear the eye of the world, more than the eye of heaven; and think there is no vertue, but railing at vice; and no sin, but giving scandal. They rail at a poor little kept player, and keep themselves some young modest pulpit comedian to be privy to their sins in their closets, not to tell e'm of them in their chappels.

Quack. Nay, the truth on't is, priests among women now, have quite got the better of us lay-confessors, physicians.

Horn. And they are rather their patients, but——

Enter my Lady Fidget, looking about her

Now we talk of women of honour, here comes one. Step behind the screen there; and but observe, if I have not particular privileges with the women of reputation already, doctor, already.

Lady Fidge.

Lady Fiddg. Well, Horner, am not I a woman of honour? you see I'm as good as my word.

Horn. And you shall see, madam, I'll not be behind-hand with you in honour; and I'll be as good as my word too, if you please but to withdraw into the next room.

Lady Fiddg. But first, my dear sir, you must promise to have a care of my dear honour.

Horn. If you talk a word more of your honour, you'll make me incapable to wrong it: to talk of honour in the mysteries of love, is like talking of heaven, or the deity in an operation of witchcraft, just when you are employing the devil; it makes the charm impotent.

Lady Fiddg. Nay, fie; let us not be smooty: but you talk of mysteries, and bewitching to me; I don't understand you.

Horn. I tell you, madam: the word money in a mistress's mouth, at such a nick of time, is not a more disheartning sound to a younger brother, than that of honour to an eager lover, like my self.

Lady Fiddg. But you can't blame a lady of my reputation to be chary.

Horn. Chary—I have been chary of it already, by the report I have caus'd of my self.

Lad. Fiddg. Ay, but if you shou'd ever let other women know that dear secret, it would come out: nay, you must have a great care of your conduct; for my acquaintance are so censorious, (oh, 'tis a wicked censorious world, Mr. Horner,) I say, are so censorious and detracting, that perhaps they'll talk to the prejudice of my honour, tho' you shou'd not let them know the dear secret.

Horn. Nay, madam, rather than they shall prejudice your honour, I'll prejudice theirs; and to serve you, I'll lie with 'em all, make the secret their own, and then they'll keep it: I am a *Machiavel* in love, madam.

Lady Fiddg. O, no sir, not that way.

Horn. Nay, the devil take me, if censorious women are to be silenc'd any other way.

Lady

Lady Fiddg. A secret is better kept, I hope, by a single person than a multitude: therefore pray do not trust any body else with it, dear, dear Mr. *Horner*.

Enter Sir Jasper Fidget.

Sir Jasp. How now!

Lady Fiddg. O my husband—prevented—and what's almost as bad, found with my arms about another man—that will appear too much—what shall I say?

(Aside.)

Sir Jasper come hither, I am trying if Mr. *Horner* were ticklish, and he's as ticklish as can be; I love to torment the confounded toad, let you and I tickle him.

Sir Jasp. No, your ladyship will tickle him better without me, I suppose; but is this your buying china, I thought you had been at the china-house.

Horn. China-house, that's my cue, I must take it.

(Aside.)

A pox, can't you keep your impertinent wives at home? some men are troubled with the husbands, but I with the wives; but I'd have you to know, since I cannot be your journeyman by night, I will not be your drudge by day, to squire your wife about, and be your man of straw, or scare-crow only to pyes and jays, that wou'd be nibbling at your forbidden fruit; I shall be shortly the hackney gentleman usher of the town.

Sir Jasp. He, he, he, poor fellow, he's in the right on't faith; to squire women about for other folks, is as ungrateful an employment, as to tell money for other folks.

(Aside.)

He, he, he, ben't angry *Horner*—

Lady Fiddg. No, 'tis I have more reason to be angry, who am left by you, to go abroad indecently alone; or what is more indecent, to pin my self upon such ill-bred people of your acquaintance, as this is.

Sir Jasp. Nay, pr'ythee, what has he done?

Lady Fiddg. Nay he has done nothing.

Sir Jasp. But what d'ye take ill, if he has done nothing?

Lady Fiddg. Ha, ha, ha, faith, I can't but laugh however; why, d'ye think the unmannerly toad wou'd not come down to me to the coach; I was fain to come up to fetch him, or go without him, which I was resolv-

ed

ed not to do ; for he knows china very well, and has himself very good, but will not let me see it, lest I shou'd beg some ; but I will find it out, and have what I came for yet. (*Exit Lady Fidget, and locks the door, followed by Horner to the door.*)

Horn. Lock the door, madam——

(*Apart to Lady Fidget.*)

So, she has got into my chamber, and lock'd me out ; O the impertinency of woman-kind ! well sir *Jasper*, plain-dealing is a jewel ; if ever you suffer your wife to trouble me again here, she shall carry you home a pair of horns, by my lord-mayor she shall ; though I cannot furnish you my self, you are sure, yet I'll find a way.

Sir Jasp. Ha, ha, ha ; at my first coming in, and finding her arms about him, tickling him, it seems, I was half jealous, but now I see my folly. (*Aside.*)
He, he, he, poor *Horn*.

Horn. Nay, though you laugh now, 'twill be my turn e'er long : O women, more impertinent, more cunning, and more mischievous than their monkies, and to me almost as ugly — now is she throwing my things about, and rifling all I have, but I'll get into her the back way, and so rifle her for it——

Sir Jasp. Ha, ha, ha, poor angry *Horn*.

Horn. Stay here a little, I'll ferret her out to you presently, I warrant. (*Exit Horner at t'other door.*)

Sir Jasp. Wife, my lady *Fidget*, wife, he is coming in to you the back way.

Sir Jasper calls through the door to his wife, she answers from within.

Lady Fidge. Let him come, and welcome, which way he will.

Sir Jasp. He'll catch you, and use you roughly, and be too strong for you.

Lady Fidge. Don't you trouble your self, let him if he can.

Quack. (*Behind*) This indeed I cou'd not have believed from him, nor any but my own eyes.

Enter Mrs. Squeamish.

Squeam. Where's this woman-hater, this toad, this ugly, greasy, dirty sloven ?

Sir Jasp.

Sir *Jasper*. So, the women all will have him ugly ; methinks he is a comely person, but his wants make his form contemptible to 'em ; and 'tis e'en as my wife said yesterday, talking of him, that a proper handsome eunuch, was as ridiculous a thing, as a gigantick coward.

Sq. Sir *Jasper*, your servant, where is the odious beast ?

Sir *Jasp.* He's within in his chamber, with my wife ; she's playing the wag with him.

Sq. Is she so ? and he's a clownish beast, he'll give her no quarter, he'll play the wag with her again, let me tell you ; come, let's go help her—— what, the door's lock'd ?

Sir *Jasp.* A, my wife lock'd it——

Squeam. Did she so ? let us break it open then.

Sir *Jasp.* No, no, he'll do her no hurt.

Squeam. No — but is there no other way to get into 'em ; whether goes this ? I will disturb 'em. (*Aside.*
(*Exit Squeam. at another door.*) Enter old lady *Squeam.*

O. L. *Squeam.* Where is this harlotry, this impudent baggage, this rambling tomrig ? O sir *Jasper*, I'm glad to see you here ; did you not see my vile grandchild come in hither just now.

Sir *Jasp.* Yes.

O. L. *Squeam.* Ay, but where is she then ? where is she ? lord, sir *Jasper*, I have e'en rattled my self to pices in pursuit of her ; but can you tell what she makes here ? they say below, no woman lodges here.

Sir *Jasp.* No.

O. L. *Squeam.* No — what does she here then ? say, if it be not a woman's lodging, what makes she here ? but are you sure no woman lodges here ?

Sir *Jasp.* No, nor no man neither, this is Mr. *Horner's* lodging.

O. L. *Squeam.* Is it so are you sure ?

Sir *Jasp.* Yes, yes.

O. L. *Squeam.* So, then there's no hurt in't I hope ; but where is he ?

Sir *Jasp.* He's in the next room with my wife.

O. L. *Squeam.* Nay if you trust him with your wife, I may with my biddy ; they say he's a merry harm-

less man now, e'en as harmless a man as e'er came out of *Italy* with a good voice; and as pretty harmless company for a lady, as a snake without his teeth.

Sir Fasp. Ay, ay, poor man. (*Enter Mrs. Squeam.*

Squeam. I can't find 'em—oh, are you here, grandmother? I follow'd, you must know, my lady *Fidget* hither; 'tis the prettiest lodging, and I have been staring on the prettiest pictures.

Enter Lady Fidget with a piece of China in her hand, and Horner following.

Lady Fidge. And I have been toying and moyling, for the prettiest piece of china, my dear.

Horn. Nay, she has been too hard for me, do what I cou'd.

Squeam. Oh lord, I'll have some china too, good Mr. *Horner*, don't think to give other people china, and me none, come in with me too.

Horn. Upon my honour I have none left now.

Squeam. Nay, nay, I have known you deny your china before now, but you shan't put me off so, come—

Horn. This lady had the last there.

Lady Fidge. Yes indeed, madam, to my certain knowledge he has no more left.

Sq. O, but it may be he may have some you cou'd not find.

Lady Fidge. What d'ye think if he had any left, I wou'd not have had it too, for we women of quality never think we have china enough.

Horn. Do not take it ill, I cannot make china for you all, but I will have a rol-waggon for you too, another time.

Squeam. Thank you, dear Toad. (*To Horner aside.*

Lady Fidge. What do you mean by that promise?

Horn. Alas! she has an innocent, literal understanding. (*Apart to lady Fidge.*

O. L. Squeam. Poor Mr. *Horner*, he has enough to do to please you all, I see.

Horn. Ay, madam, you see how they use me.

O. L. Squeam. Poor gentleman, I pity you.

Horn. I thank you, madam; I cou'd never find pity, but from such reverend ladies as you are; the young ones will never spare a man.

Squeam.

Squeam. Come, come, beast, and go dine with us, for we shall want a man at ombre after dinner.

Horn. That's all their use of me, madam, you see!

Squeam. Come, sloven, I'll lead you, to be sure of you.
(Pulls him by the cravat.

O. L. *Squeam.* Alas, poor man, how she tugs him! kifs, kifs her, that's the way to make such nice women quiet.

Horn. No, madam, that remedy is worse than the torment, they know I dare suffer any thing rather than do it.

O. L. *Squeam.* Prithee kifs her, and I'll give you her picture in little, that you admir'd so last night, prithee do.

Horn. Well, nothing but that could bribe me, I love a woman only in effigy, and good painting, as much as I hate them—I'll do't, for I cou'd adore the devil well painted.
(Kisses Mrs. Squeam.

Squeam. Foh, you filthy toad, nay, now I've done jesting.

O. L. *Squeam.* Ha, ha, ha, I told you so.

Squeam. Foh, a kifs of his——

Sir *Jasp.* Has no more hurt in't, than one of my spaniels.

Squeam. Nor no more good neither.

Quack. I will now believe any thing he tells me.

(Behind.

Enter Mr. Pinchwife.

Lady *Fidg.* O lord, here's a man, sir *Jasper*, my mask, my mask, I wou'd not be seen here for the world.

Sir *Jasp.* What not, when I am with you?

Lady *Fidg.* No, no; my honour—let's be gone.

Squeam. Oh grandmother, let us be gone, make haste, make haste, I know not how he may censure us.

Lady *Fidg.* Be found in the lodging of any thing like a man! away. (Exeunt Sir Jasper, Lady Fidg. Old Lady Squeam. Mrs. Squeamish.

Quack. What's here, another cuckold—he looks like one, and none else sure has any business with him.

(Behind.

Horn. Well, what brings my dear friend hither?

Mr. Pinch. Your impertinency.

Horn. My impertinency — why you gentlemen that have got handsome wives, think you have a privilege of saying any thing to your friends, and are as brutish, as if you were our creditors.

Mr. Pinch. No, sir, I'll ne'er trust you any way.

Horn. But why not, dear *Jack*? why? diffide in me, thou know'st so well.

Mr. Pinch. Because I do know you so well?

Horn. Han't I been always thy friend, honest *Jack*, always ready to serve thee, in love, or battle, before thou wert married, and am so still?

Mr. Pinch. I believe so, you wou'd be my second now indeed.

Horn. Well then, dear *Jack*, why so unkind, so grum, so strange to me? come, prithee kiss me, dear rogue, 'gad I was always, I say, and am still as much thy servant as——

Mr. Pinch. As I am yours, sir. What, you wou'd send a kiss to my Wife, is that it?

Horn. So there 'tis— a man can't shew his friendship to a married man, but presently he talks of his wife to you; prithee let thy wife alone, and let thee and I be all one, as we were wont: what, thou art as shy of my kindness, as a *Lombard-street* alderman of a courtier's civility at *Locketts*.

Mr. Pinch. But you are over kind to me, as kind as if I were your cuckold already; yet I must confess, you ought to be kind and civil to me, since I am so kind, so civil to you, as to bring you this; look you there, sir.

(Delivers him a letter.)

Horn. What is't?

Mr. Pinch. Only a love-letter, sir.

Horn. From whom— how! this is from your wife— hum—and hum——

(Reads.)

Mr. Pinch. Even from my wife, sir; am I not wondrous kind and civil to you now too? but you'll not think her so.

(Aside.)

Horn. Ha, is this a trick of his, or hers?

Mr. Pinch. The Gentleman's surpriz'd, I find, what, you expected a kinder letter?

Horn. No faith, not I, how cou'd I?

Mr. Pinch.

Mr. Pinch. Yes, yes, I'm sure you did ; a man so well made as you are, must needs be disappointed, if the women declare not their passion at first sight or opportunity.

Horn. But what shou'd this mean ? stay, the postscript. Be sure you love me, whatsoever my husband says to the contrary, and let him not see this, lest he shou'd come home, and pinch me, or kill my squirrel.

(Reads aside.

It seems he knows not what the letter contains. (Aside.

Mr. Pinch. Come, ne'er wonder at it so much.

Horn. Faith, I can't help it.

Mr. Pinch. Now, I think, I have deserved your infinite friendship and kindness, and have shewed my self sufficiently an obliging-kind friend and husband ; am I not so, to bring a letter from my wife to her gallant ?

Horn. Ay, the devil take me, art thou, the most obliging, kind friend and husband in the world, ha, ha.

Mr. Pinch. Well, you may be merry, sir, but in short I must tell you, sir, my honour will suffer no jesting.

Horn. What dost thou mean ?

Mr. Pinch. Does the letter want a comment ? then know, sir, though I have been so civil a husband, as to bring you a letter from my wife, to let you kiss and court her to my face, I will not be a cuckold, sir, I will not.

Horn. Thou art mad with jealousy ; I never saw thy wife in my life, but at the play yesterday, and I know not if it were she or no ; I court her, I kiss her !

Mr. Pinch. I will not be a cuckold, I say ; there will be danger in making me a cuckold.

Horn. Why, wert thou not well cur'd of thy last clap ?

Mr. Pinch. I wear a sword.

Horn. It should be taken from thee, lest thou shouldst do thy self a mischief with it ; thou art mad, man.

Mr. Pinch. As mad as I am, and as merry as you are, I must have more reason from you e'er we part ; I say again, though you kiss'd, and courted last night my wife in man's cloaths, as she confesses in her letter—

Horn. Ha——

(Aside.

Mr. Pinch. Both she and I say, you must not design it again, for you have mistaken your woman, as you have done your man.

Horn. O——I understand something now——

(Aside.

Was that thy wife? why wou'dst thou not tell me it 'twas she? faith, my freedom with her was your fault, not mine.

Mrs. Pinch. Faith, so 'twas——

(Aside.

Horn. Fie, I'd never do't to a woman before her husband's face, sure.

Mr. Pinch. But I had rather you should do't to my wife before my face, than behind my back; and that you shall never do.

Horn. No——you will hinder me.

Mr. Pinch. If I wou'd not hinder you, you see by her letter she wou'd.

Horn. Well, I must e'en acquiesce then, and be contented with what she writes.

Mr. Pinch. I'll assure you 'twas voluntarily writ, I had no hand in't, you may believe me.

Horn. I do believe thee, faith.

Mr. Pinch. And believe her too, for she's an innocent creature, has no dissembling in her; and so fare you well, sir.

Horn. Pray, however, present my humble service to her, and tell her I will obey her letter to a tittle, and fulfill her desires, be what they will, or with what difficulty soever I do't; and you shall be no more jealous of me, I warrant her, and you——

Mr. Pinch. Well, then fare you well, and play with any man's honour but mine, kiss any man's wife but mine, and welcome——
(Exit Mr. Pinch.

Horn. Ha, ha, ha, Doctor.

Quack. It seems he has not heard the report of you, or does not believe it.

Horn. Ha, ha, now Doctor, what think you?

Quack. Pray let's see the letter—hum—for—dear—love you——
(Reads the letter.

Horn. I wonder how she cou'd contrive it! what say'st thou to't? 'tis an original.

Quack. So are your cuckolds too originals: for they are like no other common cuckolds, and I will henceforth believe it not impossible for you to cuckold the grand Scignior amidst his guards or eunuchs, that I say——
Horn.

Horn. And I say for the letter, 'tis the first love-letter that ever was without flames, darts, fates, destinies, lying and dissembling in't.

Enter Sparkish pulling in Mr. Pinchwife.

Spark. Come back, you are a pretty brother-in-law, neither go to church, nor to dinner with your sister bride.

Mr. Pinch. My sister denies her marriage, and you see is gone away from you dissatisfy'd.

Spark. Pshaw, upon a foolish scruple, that our parson was not in lawful orders, and did not say all the common-prayer, but 'tis her modesty only I believe; but let women be never so modest the first day, they'll be sure to come to themselves by night, and I shall have enough of her then; in the mean time, *Harry Horner*, you must dine with me, I keep my wedding at my aunt's in the *Piazza*.

Horn. Thy wedding! what stale maid has liv'd to despair of a husband, or what young one of a gallant?

Spark. O your servant, sir—— this gentleman's sister then——no stale maid.

Horn. I am sorry for't.

Mr. Pinch. How comes he so concern'd for her——
[*Aside.*

Spark. You sorry for't, why do you know any ill by her?

Horn. No, I know none but by thee, 'tis for her sake, not yours, and another man's sake that might have hop'd, I thought——

Spark. Another man, another man, what is his name?

Horn. Nay, since 'tis past, he shall be nameless. Poor *Harcourt*, I am sorry thou hast miss'd her—— [*Aside.*

Mr. Pinch. He seems to be much troubled at the match—— [*Aside.*

Spark. Prithee tell me—— nay you shan't go, brother.

Mr. Pinch. I must of necessity, but I'll come to you to dinner. [Exit Pinchwife.

Spark. But *Harry*, what have I a rival in my wife already? but with all my heart, for he may be of use to me hereafter, for though my hunger is now my sauce, and I can fall on heartily without, the time will
C 4 come,

come, when a rival will be as good sauce for a married man to a wife, as an orange to veal.

Horn. O thou damn'd rogue, thou hast set my teeth on edge with thy Orange.

Spark. Then let's to dinner, there I was with you again, come.

Horn. But who dines with thee ?

Spark. My friends and relations, my brother *Pinchwife*, you see of your acquaintance.

Horn. And his wife ?

Spark. No, 'gad, he'll ne'er let her come amongst us good fellows ; your stingy country coxcomb keeps his wife from his friends, as he does his little firkin of ale, for his own drinking, and a gentleman can't get a smack on't, but his servants, when his back is turn'd, broach it at their pleasures, and dust it away, ha, ha, ha, 'gad I am witty I think, considering I was married to day, by the world, but come——

Horn. No, I will not dine with you, unless you can fetch her too.

Spark. Pshaw, what pleasure canst thou have with women now, *Harry* ?

Horn. My eyes are not gone, I love a good prospect yet, and will not dine with you, unless she does too ; go fetch her therefore, but do not tell her husband, 'tis for my sake.

Spark. Well, I'll go try what I can do ; in the mean time come away to my aunt's lodging, 'tis in the way to *Pinchwife's*.

Horn. The poor woman has call'd for aid, and stretch'd forth her hand, doctor ; I cannot but help her over the pale out of the bryars.

[*Exeunt Sparkish, Horner, Quack.*]

The SCENE changes to Pinchwife's House.

Mrs. Pinchwife alone leaning on her elbow. A table, pen, ink, and paper.

Mrs. Pinch. Well, 'tis e'en so, I have got the London disease, they call love, I am sick of my husband ; and for my gallant ; I have hear'd this distemper call'd a fever, but methinks 'tis liker an ague, for when I think of my husband, I tremble, and am in a cold sweat,

sweat, and have inclinations to vomit, but when I think of my gallant, dear Mr. Horner, my hot fit comes, and I am all in a fever indeed, and as in other fevers, my own chamber is tedious to me, and I would fain be remov'd to his, and then methinks I shou'd be well; ah poor Mr. Horner, well, I cannot, will not stay here; therefore I'll make an end of my letter to him, which shall be a finer letter than my last, because I have studied it like any thing; oh sick, sick!

(Takes the pen and writes.)

Enter Mr. Pinchwife, who seeing her writing, steals softly behind her, and looking over her shoulder, snatches the paper from her.

Mr. Pinch. What, writing more letters?

Mrs. Pinch. O lord, bud, why d'ye frighten me so?

(She offers to run out; he stops her, and reads.)

Mr. Pinch. How's this! nay, you shall not stir, madam: (dear, dear, dear Mr. Horner——) very well—I have taught you to write letters to good purpose—but let's see't.

First I am to beg your pardon for my boldness in writing to you, which I'd have you to know I would not have done, had not you said first you lov'd me so extremely, which if you do, you will never suffer me to lie in the arms of another man, whom I loath, nauseate, and detest——(now you can write these filthy words: but what follows?)——therefore, I hope you will speedily find some way to free me from this unfortunate match, which was never, I assure you, of my choice, but I'm afraid, 'tis already too far gone; however, if you love me, as I do you, you will try what you can do; but you must help me away before to morrow, or else alas! I shall be for ever out of your reach, for I can defer no longer our——our——(what's to follow our—speak what) our journey into

(The letter concludes.)

the country I suppose——oh woman, damn'd woman, and love, damn'd love, their old tempter; for this is one of his miracles, in a moment he can make those blind that cou'd see, and those see that were blind, those dumb that cou'd speak, and those prattle who were dumb before; nay, what is more than all, make

these dough-back'd, senseless, indocile animals, women, too hard for us their politick lords and rulers in a moment : but make an end of your letter, and then I'll make an end of you thus, and all my plagues together.

(Draws his sword.)

Mrs. Pinch. O lord, O lord, you are such a passionate man, bud.

Enter Sparkish.

Spark. How now ! what's here to do ?

Mr. Pinch. This fool here now !

Spark. What, drawn upon your wife ? you shou'd never do that, but at night in the dark, when you can't hurt her ; this is my sister-in-law, is it not ? ay, faith, e'en our country *Margery* ? *(pulls aside her handkerchief,)* one may know her, come, she and you must go dine with me, dinner's ready, come ; but where's my wife, is she not come home yet, where is she ?

Mr. Pinch. Making you a cuckold, 'tis that they all do, as soon as they can.

Spark. What, the wedding-day ? no, a wife that designs to make a cully of her husband, will be sure to let him win the first stake of love, by the world ; but come, they stay dinner for us, come, I'll lead down our *Margery*.

Mrs. Pinch. No———sir, go, we'll follow you.

Spark. I will not wag without you.

Mr. Pinch. This coxcomb is a sensible torment to me amidst the greatest in the world.

Spark. Come, come, madam *Margery*.

Mr. Pinch. No, I'll lead her my way ; what wou'd you treat your friends with mine, for want of your own wife ?

(Leads her to t'other door, and locks her in, and returns.)
I am contented my rage shou'd take breath——— *(Aside.)*

Spark. I told *Horner* this.

Mr. Pinch. Come now.

Spark. Lord how shy you are of your wife ! but let me tell you, brother, we men of wit have amongst us a saying, that cuckolding, like the small-pox, comes with a fear ; and you may keep your wife as much as you will out of danger of infection, but if her constitution incline her to't, she'll have it sooner or later, by the world, say they.

Mr.

Mr. *Pinch*. What a thing is a cuckold, that every fool can make him ridiculous——— (*Aside*. Well, fir——but let me advise you, now you are come to be concern'd, because you suspect the danger, not to neglect the means to prevent it, especially when the greatest share of the malady will light upon your own head, for——

*How's'e'er the kind wife's belly comes to swell,
The husband breeds for her, and first is ill.*

ACT V. SCENE. I.

Mr. Pinchwife's house.

Enter Mr. Pinchwife and Mrs. Pinchwife. A table and candle.

Mr. Pinchwife.

COME, take the pen and make an end of the letter, just as you intended; if you are false in a tittle, I shall soon perceive it, and punish you with this as you deserve, (*lays his hand on his sword*) write what was to follow——let's see——(you must make haste and help me away before to morrow, or else I shall be for ever out of your reach, for I can defer no longer our——) what follows our?——

Mrs. Pinch. Must all out then, bud? ——look you there then.

(*Mrs. Pinch. takes the pen and writes.*

Mr. Pinch. Let's see——(for I can defer no longer our——wedding——your slighted *Alithea*) what's the meaning of this, my sister's name to't? speak, unriddle.

Mrs. Pinch. Yes indeed, bud.

Mr. Pinch. But why her name to't? speak——speak, I say.

Mrs. Pinch. Ay, but you'll tell her then again: if you wou'd not tell her again——

Mr. Pinch. I will not: I am stunn'd; my head turns round. Speak.

Mrs.

Mrs. *Pinch*. Won't you tell her indeed, and indeed?

Mr. *Pinch*. No : Speak, I say.

Mrs. *Pinch*. She'll be angry with me ; but I had rather she shou'd be angry with me than you, bud. And to tell you the truth, 'twas she made me write the letter, and taught me what I should write.

Mr. *Pinch*. Ha—— (I thought the stile was somewhat better than her own.) (*Aside*.
Cou'd she come to you to teach you, since I had lock'd you up alone ?

Mrs. *Pinch*. O, through the key-hole, bud.

Mr. *Pinch*. But why shou'd she make you write a letter for her to him, since she can write her self ?

Mrs. *Pinch*. Why, she said because——for I was unwilling to do it.

Mr. *Pinch*. Because what——because.

Mrs. *Pinch*. Because lest Mr. *Horner* should be cruel, and refuse her, or vain afterwards, and shew the letter, she might disown it, the hand not being her's.

Mr. *Pinch*. How's this ? ha——then I think I shall come to my self again——this changeling cou'd not invent this lye: but if she cou'd, why shou'd she ? she might think I shou'd soon discover it——stay——now I think on't too, *Horner* said he was sorry she had married *Sparkish* ; and her disowning her marriage to me, makes me think she has evaded it for *Horner*'s sake : yet why should she take this course ? but men in love are fools ; women may well be so—— (*Aside*.
But hark you, madam, your sister went out in the morning, and I have not seen her within since.

Mrs. *Pinch*. Alack a-day, she has been crying all day above it seems in a corner.

Mr. *Pinch*. Where is she ? let me speak with her.

Mrs. *Pinch*. O lord, then she'll discover all—— (*Aside*.
Pray hold, bud ; what d'ye mean to discover me ! she'll know I have told you then : pray, bud, let me talk with her first——

Mr. *Pinch*. I must speak with her, to know whether *Horner* ever made her any promise, and whether she be married to *Sparkish* or no.

Mrs. *Pinch*. Pray, dear bud, don't till I have spoken
with

with her, and told her that I have told you all ; for she'll kill me else:

Mr. Pinch. Go then, and bid her come out to me.

Mrs. Pinch. Yes, yes, bud——

Mr. Pinch. Let me see——

Mrs. Pinch. I'll go, but she is not within to come to him : I have just got time to know of *Lucy* her maid, who first set me on work, what lye I shall tell next ; for I am e'en at my wit's end— (*Exit Mrs. Pinchwife.*

Mr. Pinch. Well, I resolve it, *Horner* shall have her : I'd rather give him my sister, than lend him my wife ; and such an alliance will prevent his pretensions to my wife, sure—— I'll make him of kin to her, and then he won't care for her.

Mrs. Pinchwife returns.

Mrs. Pinch. O lord, bud, I told you what anger you would make me with my sister.

Mr. Pinch. Won't she come hither ?

Mrs. Pinch. No, no : alack-a-day, she's a'fham'd to look you in the face ; and she says, if you go in to her, she'll run away down stairs, and shamefully go her self to *Mr. Horner*, who has promis'd her marriage, she says ; and she will have no other, so she won't——

Mr. Pinch. Did he so—— promise her marriage—— then she shall have no other. Go tell her so ; and if she will come and discourse with me a little concerning the means, I will about it immediately, go——

(*Exit Mrs. Pinch.*

His estate is equal to *Sparkish's* and his extraction is much better than his as his parts are : but my chief reason is, I'd rather be of kin to him by the name of brother-in-law, than that of cuckold——

Well, what says she now ?

Mrs. Pinch. Why, she says she would only have you lead her to *Horner's* lodging——

with whom she first will discourse the matter before she talks with you, which yet she cannot do ; for alack, poor creature, she says she can't so much as look you in the face, therefore she'll come to you in a mask : and you must excuse her, if she make you no answer to any question of yours, till you have brought

brought her to Mr. *Horner*; and if you will not chide her, nor question her, she'll come out to you immediately.

Mr. *Pinch*. Let her come: I will not speak a word to her, nor require a word from her.

Mrs. *Pinch*. Oh, I forgot: besides, she says, she cannot look you in the face, tho' thro' a mask; therefore would desire you to put out the candle.

Mr. *Pinch*. I agree to all: let her make haste—

(Exit Mrs. Pinchwife.

There, 'tis out—

(puts out the candle.

My case is something better: I'd rather fight with *Horner* for not lying with my sister, than for lying with my wife; and of the two, I had rather find my sister too forward, than my wife: I expected no other from her free education, as she calls it, and her passion for the town—well—— wife and sister are names which make us expect love and duty, pleasure and comfort; but we find 'em plagues and torments, and are equally, tho' differently troublesome to their keeper: for we have as much ado to get people to lie with our sisters, as to keep 'em from lying with our wives.

Enter Mrs. Pinchwife mask'd, and in hoods and scarves, and a night-gown and petticoat of *Alithea's*, in the dark.

What are you come, sister? let us go then— but first, let me lock up my wife. Mrs. *Margery*, where are you?

Mrs. *Pinch*. Here, bud.

Mr. *Pinch*. Come hither, that I may lock you up: get you in.

(Locks the door.

Come, sister, where are you now?

Mrs. Pinchwife gives him her hand; but when he lets her go, she steals softly on t'other side of him, and is led away by him for his sister *Alithea*.

The SCENE changes to *Horner's* lodgings.

Quack, *Horner*.

Quack. What, all alone? not so much as one of your cuckolds here, nor one of their wives! they use to take their turns with you, as if they were to watch you.

Horn. Yes, it often happens, that a cuckold is but his wife's spy, and is more upon family duty when he
is

is with her gallant abroad, hindring his pleasure, than when he is at home with her playing the gallant : but the hardest duty a married woman imposes upon a lover, is keeping her husband company always.

Quack. And his fondness wearies you almost as soon as hers.

Horn. A pox, keeping a cuckold company, after you have had his wife, is as tiresome as the company of a country squire to a witty fellow of the town, when he has got all his money.

Quack. And as at first a man makes a friend of the husband to get the wife, so at last you are fain to fall out with the wife to be rid of the husband.

Horn. Ay, most cuckold-makers are true courtiers, when once a poor man has crack'd his credit for 'em, they can't abide to come near him.

Quack. But at first, to draw him in, are so sweet, so kind, so dear ! just as you are to *Pinchwife* : but what becomes of that intrigue with his wife ?

Horn. A pox, he's as furly as an alderman that has been bit ; and since he's so coy, his wife's kindness is in vain, for she's a silly innocent.

Quack. Did she not send you a letter by him ?

Horn. Yes : but that's a riddle I have not yet solv'd — allow the poor creature to be willing, she is silly too, and he keeps her up so close —

Quack. Yes, so close that he makes her but the more willing, and adds but revenge to her love ; which two, when met, seldom fail of satisfying each other one way or other.

Horn. What, here's the man we are talking of, I think.

Enter Mr. Pinchwife, leading in his wife mask'd, muffled, and in her sister's gown.

Horn. Pshaw.

Quack. Bringing his wife to you is the next thing to bringing a love letter from her.

Horn. What means this ?

Mr. Pinch. The last time, you know, sir, I brought you a love-letter, now you see a mistress ; I think you'll say I am a civil man to you.

Horn. Ay, the devil take me, will I say thou art the ci-

civilest man I ever met with ; and I have known some. I fancy I understand thee now better than I did the letter. But hark thee in thy ear —

Mr. *Pinch*. What ?

Horn. Nothing but the usual question, man, is she sound, on thy word ?

Mr. *Pinch*. What, you take her for a wench, and me for a pimp ?

Horn. Pshaw, wench and pimp, paw words ; I know thou art an honest fellow, and hast a great acquaintance among the ladies, and perhaps hast made love for me, rather than let me make love to thy wife.—

Mr. *Pinch*. Come, sir, in short, I am for no fooling.

Horn. Nor I neither : therefore prithee let us see her face presently ? make her shew, man : art thou sure I don't know her ?

Mr. *Pinch*. I am sure you do know her.

Horn. A pox, why dost thou bring her to me then ?

Mr. *Pinch*. Because she's a relation of mine.

Horn. Is she, faith, man ! then thou art still more civil and obliging, dear rogue.

Mr. *Pinch*. Who desir'd me to bring her to you.

Horn. Then she is obliging, dear rogue.

Mr. *Pinch*. You'll make her welcome for my sake, I hope.

Horn. I hope she is handsome enough to make her self welcome : prithee, let her unmask.

Mr. *Pinch*. Do you speak to her : she wou'd never be rul'd by me.

Horn. Madam——

(*Mrs. Pinchwife whispers to Horner.*
She says she must speak with me in private: withdraw, prithee.

Mr. *Pinch*. She's unwilling, it seems, I shou'd know all her undecent conduct in this business— (*Aside.*
Well then, I'll leave you together, and hope when I am gone you'll agree ; if not, you and I shan't agree, sir—

Horn. What means the fool ? if she and I agree, 'tis no matter what you and I do.

(*Whispers to Mrs. Pinchwife, who makes signs with her hand for him to be gone.*

Mr.

Mr. Pinch. In the mean time I'll fetch a parson, and find out *Sparkish*, and disabuse him.

You wou'd have me fetch a parson, wou'd you not ? well then—— now I think I am rid of her, and shall have no more trouble with her—our sisters and daughters, like usurers money, are safest when put out ; but our wives, like their writings, never safe but in our closets under lock and key. (*Exit Mr. Pinchwife.*)

Enter Boy.

Boy. Sir *Jasper Fidget*, sir, is coming up.

Horn. Here's the trouble of a cuckold now we are talking of : a pox on him, has he not enough to do to hinder his wife's sport, but he must other womens too ?—step in here, madam. (*Exit Mrs. Pinchwife.*)

Enter Sir Jasper.

Sir Jasp. My best and dearest friend.

Horn. The old stile, doctor—

Well, be short, for I am busy. What would your impertinent wife have now ?

Sir Jasp. Well guest, y'faith ; for I do come from her.

Horn. To invite me to supper ? tell her I can't come : go.

Sir Jasp. Nay, now you are out, faith ; for my lady, and the whole knot of the virtuous gang, as they call themselves, are resolv'd upon a frolick of coming to you to night in masquerade, and are all drest already.

Horn. I shan't be at home.

Sir Jasp. Lord, how churlish he is to women—— nay, prithee, don't disappoint 'em ; they'll think 'tis my fault : prithee don't. I'll send in the banquet and the fiddles : but make no noise on't ; for the poor virtuous rogues would not have it known, for the world, that they go a masquerading, and they would come to no man's ball but yours.

Horn. Well, well—get you gone ; and tell 'em, if they come, 'twill be at the peril of their honour and yours.

Sir Jasp. He, he, he—we'll trust you for that : fare-well— (*Exit Sir Jasper.*)

Horn. Doctor, anon you too shall be my guest.

But now I'm going to a private feast.

The

The SCENE changes to the Piazza of Covent-Garden.

Sparkish, Pinchwife.

Spark. But who would have thought a woman could have been false to me? by the world, I could not have thought it.

(Sparkish with the letter in his hand.)

Mr. Pinch. You were for giving and taking liberty: she has taken it only, sir, now you find in that letter. You are a frank person, and so is she you see there.

Spark. Nay, if this be her hand—for I never saw it.

Mr. Pinch. 'Tis no matter whether that be her hand or no; I am sure this hand at her desire led her, to Mr. Horner, with whom I left her just now, to go fetch a parson to 'em at their desire too, to deprive you of her for ever; for it seems yours was but a mock-marriage.

Spark. Indeed, she wou'd needs have it that 'twas Harcourt himself, in a parson's habit, that married us; but I'm sure he told me 'twas his brother Ned.

Mr. Pinch. O, there 'tis out; and you were deceiv'd, not she: for you are such a frank person—but I must be gone—you'll find her at Mr. Horner's: go, and believe your eyes. *(Exit Mr. Pinchwife.)*

Spark. Nay, I'll to her, and call her as many crocodiles, syrens, harpies, and other heathenish names, as a poet would do a mistress who had refus'd to hear his suit, nay more, his verses on her.

But stay, is not that she following a torch at t'other end of the *Piazza*, and from *Horner's* certainly——'tis so——.

Enter Alithea following a torch, and Lucy behind.

You are well met, tho' you don't think so. What, you have made a short visit to Mr. Horner? but I suppose you'll return to him presently, by that time the parson can be with him.

Alith. Mr. Horner and the parson, sir——

Spark. Come, madam, no more dissembling, no more jilting; for I am no more a frank person.

Alith. How's this?

Lucy. So 'twill work I see——

(Aside.)

Spark. Cou'd you find out no easy country fool to abuse? none but me, a gentleman of wit an pleasure about

about the town? but it was your pride to be too hard for a man of parts, unworthy false woman; false as a friend that lends a man money to lose; false as dice, undo those that trust all they have to 'em.

Lucy. He has been a great bubble by his families, as they say—— [Aside.

Alith. You have been too merry, sir, at your wedding-dinner, sure

Spark. What d'ye mock me too?

Alith. Or you have been deluded.

Spark. By you.

Alith. Let me understand you.

Spark. Have you the confidence, I shou'd call it something else, since you know your guilt, to stand my just reproaches? you did not write an impudent letter to Mr. Horner? who I find now has clubb'd with you in deluding me with his aversion for women, that I might not, forsooth, suspect him for my rival.

Lucy. D'ye think the gentleman can be jealous now, madam—— (Aside.

Alith. I write a letter to Mr. Horner!

Spark. Nay, madam, do not deny it: your brother shew'd it me just now; and told me likewise, he left you at Horner's lodging to fetch a parson to marry you to him: and I wish you joy, madam, joy, joy; and to him too, much joy; and to my self more joy for not marrying you.

Alith. So, I find my brother would break off the match, and I can consent to't, since I see this gentleman can be made jealous. (Aside.

O Lucy, by his rude usage and jealousy, he makes me almost afraid I am married to him: art thou sure 'twas Harcourt himself and no parson, that married us?

Spark. No, madam, I thank you, I suppose, that was a contrivance too of Mr. Horner's and yours, to make Harcourt play the parson; but I would as little as you have him one now, no, not for the world: for shall I tell you another truth? I never had any passion for you till now, for now I hate you. 'Tis true, I might have married your portion, as other men of parts of the town do sometimes; and so your servant. And to shew my unconcernedness, I'll come to your wedding, and

and resign you with as much joy, as I would a stale wench to a new cully; nay, with as much joy as I would after the first night, if I had been married to you: there's for you; and so your servant, servant.

(Exit Sparkish.

Alith. How was I deceiv'd in a man!

Lucy. You'll believe then a fool may be made jealous now? for that easiness in him that suffers him to be led by a wife, will likewise permit him to be persuaded against her by others.

Alith. But marry Mr. *Horner*! my brother does not intend it, sure: if I thought he did, I wou'd take thy advice, and Mr. *Harcourt* for my husband. And now I wish, that if there be any over wise woman of the town, who like me would marry a fool for fortune, liberty, or title, first, that her husband may love play, and be a cully to all the town but her, and suffer none but fortune to be mistress of his purse; then if for liberty, that he may send her into the country, under the conduct of some housewifely mother-in-law; and if for title, may the world give 'em none but that of cuckold.

Lucy. And for her greater curse, madam, may he not deserve it.

Alith. Away, impertinent — is not this my old lady *Lanterlus*?

Lucy. Yes, madam. (And here I hope we shall find Mr. *Harcourt*. ————)

(*Aside.*

(*Exeunt Alitheia, Lucy.*

The S C E N E changes again to Horner's lodgings.

Horner, Lady Fidget, Mrs. Dainty Fidget, Mrs. Squeamish. A table, banquet, and bottles.

Horn A pox, they are come too soon—before I have sent back my new mistress: — all that I have now to do, is to lock her in, that they may not see her—

(*Aside.*

Lady Fidge. That we may be sure of our welcome, we have brought our entertainment with us, and are resolved to treat thee, dear toad.

Daint.

Daint. And that we may be merry to purpose, have left sir *Jasper* and my old lady *Squeamish* quarrelling at home at baggammon.

Squeam. Therefore let us make use of our time, lest they should chance to interrupt us.

Lady Fidg. Let us sit then.

Horn. First, that you may be private, let me lock this door and that, and I'll wait upon you presently.

Lady Fidg. No, sir, shut 'em only, and your lips for ever; for we must trust you as much as our women.

Horn. You know all vanity's kill'd in me; I have no occasion for talking.

Lady Fidg. Now, ladies, supposing we had drank each of us our two bottles, let us speak the truth of our hearts.

Daint. and *Squeam.* Agreed.

Lady Fidg. By this brimmer, for truth is no where else to be found, (not in thy heart false man.)

(*Aside to Horner.*)

Horn. You have found me a true man I'm sure.

(*Aside to lady Fidget.*)

Lady Fidg. Not every way—
But let us sit and be merry.

(*Aside to Horner.*)

Lady Fidget sings.

I.

*Why should our damn'd tyrants oblige us to live
On the pittance of pleasure which they only give?*

We must not rejoice

With Wine and with noise;

In vain we must wake in a dull bed alone,

Whilst to our warm rival the bottle they're gone.

Then lay aside charms,

*And take up these * arms.*

* The glasses.

II.

'Tis Wine only gives 'em their courage and Wit,

Because we live sober, to men we submit.

If for beauties you'd pass,

Take a lick of the glass,

'Twill

'Twill mend your complexions, and when they are gone,
The best red we have is the red of the grape.

Then sisters lay't on,
And damn a good shape.

Daint. Dear brimmer, well, in token of our openness
and plain dealing, let us throw our masks over our
heads.

Horn. So, 'twill come to the glasses anon.

Squeam. Lovely brimmer, let me enjoy him first.

Lady Fidg. No, I never part with a gallant till I've
try'd him. Dear brimmer, that makest our husbands
short-sighted.

Daint. And our bashful gallants bold.

Squeam. And for want of a gallant, the buttler lovely
in our eyes : drink, eunuch.

Lady Fidg. Drink thou representative of a husband :
damn a husband.

Daint. And, as it were a husband, an old keeper.

Squeam. And an old grandmother.

Horn. And an *English* baud, and a *French* surgeon.

Lady Fidg. Ay, we have all reason to curse 'em.

Horn. For my sake, ladies.

Lady Fidg. No, for our own ; for the first spoils all
young gallants industry.

Daint. And the other's art makes 'em bold only with
common women.

Squeam. And rather run the hazard of the vile dis-
temper amongst them, than a denial amongst us.

Daint. The filthy toads chuse mistresses now, as they
do stuffs, for having been fancied and worn by others.

Squeam. For being common and cheap.

Lady Fidg. Whilst women of quality, like the rich-
est stuffs, lie untumbled, and unask'd for.

Horn. Ay, neat, and cheap, and new, often they
think best.

Daint. No, sir, the beasts will be known by a mis-
tress longer than by a suit.

Squeam. And 'tis not for cheapness neither.

Lady Fidg. No ; for the vain fops will take up drug-
gets, and embroider 'em. But I wonder at the de-
praved appetites of witty men ; they used to be out of
the

the common road, and hate imitation: pray tell me, beast, when you were a man, why you rather chose to club with a multitude in a common house for an entertainment, than to be the only guest at a good table.

Horn. Why, faith, ceremony and expectation are unsufferable to those that are sharp bent: people always eat with the best stomach at an ordinary, where every man is snatching for the best bit.

Lady Fidg. Tho' he get a cut over the fingers — but I have heard people eat most heartily of another man's meat, that is, what they do not pay for.

Horn. When they are sure of their welcome and freedom; for ceremony in love and eating, is as ridiculous as in fighting: falling on briskly is all should be done in those occasions.

Lady Fidg. Well then, let me tell you, sir, there is no where more freedom than in our houses; and we take freedom from a young person as a sign of good breeding; and a person may be as free as he pleases with us, as frolick, as gamesome, as wild as he will.

Horn. Han't I heard you all declaim against wild men.

Lady Fidg. Yes; but for all that, we think wildness in a man as desirable a quality, as in a duck or rabbit: a tame man, foh.

Horn. I know not; but your reputations frighten'd me, as much as your faces invited me.

Lady Fidg. Our reputation! lord, why shou'd you not think that we women make use of our reputation, as you men of yours, only to deceive the world with less suspicion? our vertue is like the statesman's religion, the quaker's word, the gamester's oath, and the great man's honour; but to cheat those that trust us.

Squeam. And that demureness, coyness and modesty, that you see in our faces in the boxes at plays, is as much a sign of a kind woman, as a vizard mask in the pit.

Daint. For I assure you, women are least mask'd when they have the velvet vizard on.

Lady Fidg. You wou'd have found us modest women in our denials only.

Squeam. Our bashfulness is only the reflection of the men.

Daint.

Daint. We blush when they are shame-fac'd.

Horn. I beg your pardon, ladies, I was deceiv'd in you devilishly: but why that mighty pretence to honour?

Lady Fidg. We have told you: but sometimes 'twas for the same reason you men pretend business often, to avoid ill company, to enjoy the better and more privately those you love.

Horn. But why wou'd you ne'er give a friend the wink then?

Lady Fidg. Faith your reputation frighten'd us as much as ours did you, you were so notoriously leud.

Horn. And you so seemingly honest.

Lad. Fidg. Was that all that deterr'd you?

Horn. And so expensive—— you allow freedom, you say.

Lad. Fidg. Ay, ay.

Horn. That I was afraid of losing my little money, as well as my little time; both which my other pleasures required.

Lad. Fidg. Money, foh—— you talk like a little fellow now: do such as we expect money?

Horn. I beg your pardon, madam; I must confess, I have heard, that great ladies, like great merchants, set but the higher prizes upon what they have, because they are not in necessity of taking the first offer.

Daint. Such as we make sale of our hearts!

Squeam. We brib'd for our love! foh.

Horn. With your pardon, madam, I know, like great men in offices, you seem to exact flattery and attendance only from your followers; but you have receivers about you, and such fees to pay, a man is afraid to pass your grants. Besides, we must let you win at cards, or we lose your hearts: and if you make an assignation, 'tis at a goldsmith's, jeweller's, or china-house, where for your honour you deposite to him, he must pawn his to the punctual cit; and so paying for what you take up, pays for what he takes up.

Dainty. Wou'd you not have us assur'd of our gallants love?

Squeam. For love is better known by liberality than by jealousy.

Lady Fidg.

Lady Fidge. For one may be dissembled, the other not—but my jealousy can be no longer dissembled, and they are telling ripe. *(Aside.)*

Come here's to our gallants in waiting, whom we must name; and I'll begin; this is my false rogue.

(Claps him on the back.)

Squeam. How!

Horn. So all will out now——

Squeam. Did you not tell me, 'twas for my sake only you reported your self no man? *(Aside to Horner.)*

Daint. O wretch! did you not swear to me, 'twas for my love and honour you pass'd for that thing you do?

(Aside to Horner.)

Horn. So, so.

Lady Fidge. Come, speak, ladies: this is my false villain.

Squeam. And mine too.

Daint. And mine.

Horn. Well, then, you are all three my false rogues too; and there's an end on't.

Lady Fidge. Well then, there's no remedy; sisters sharers, let us not fall out, but have a care of our honour. Tho we get no presents, no jewels of him, we are savers of our honour, the jewel of most value and use, which shines yet to the world unsuspected, tho it be counterfeit.

Horn. Nay, and is e'en as good as if it were true, provided the world think so: for honour, like beauty, now only depends on the opinion of others.

Lady Fidge. Well, Harry Common, I hope you can be true to three: swear; but 'tis to no purpose to require your oath? for you are as often forsworn, as you swear to new women.

Horn. Come, faith, madam, let's e'en pardon one another; for all the difference I find betwixt we men and you women, we forswear our selves at the beginning of an amour, you as long as it lasts.

Enter Sir Jasper Fidget and old lady Squeamish.

Sir Jasper. Oh, my lady Fidget, was this your cunning, to come to Mr. Horner without me? but you have been no where else, I hope?

Lady Fidge. No, sir Jasper.

O. L. Squeam. And you came freight hither, Biddy?

E

Squeam.

Squeam. Yes, indeed, lady grandmother.

Sir Jasp. 'Tis well, 'tis well: I knew when once they were thoroughly acquainted with poor *Horner*, they'd ne'er be from him. You may let her masquerade it with my wife and *Horner*, and I warrant her reputation safe.

Enter Boy.

Boy. O, sir, here's the gentleman come, whom you bid me not suffer to come up without giving you notice, with a lady too, and other gentlemen——

Horn. Do you all go in there, whilst I send 'em away; and boy, do you desire 'em to stay below till I come, which shall be immediately.

Exeunt Sir Jasper, Lady Squeam. Lady Fidget, Mrs. Dainty Squeamish.

Boy. Yes, sir.

(Exit.

(Exit Horner at t'other door, and returns with Mrs. Pinchwife.

Horn. You wou'd not take my advice, to be gone home, before your husband came back; he'll now discover all, yet pray, my dearest, be persuaded to go home, and leave the rest to my management: I'll let you down the back way.

Mrs. Pinch. I don't know the way home, so I don't.

Horn. My man shall wait upon you.

Mrs. Pinch. No, don't you believe that I'll go at all; what, are you weary of me already?

Horn. No, my life, 'tis that I may love you long, 'tis to secure my love, and your reputation with your husband, he'll never receive you again else.

Mrs. Pinch. What care I? d'ye think to frighten me with that? I don't intend to go to him again; you shall be my husband now.

Horn. I cannot be your husband dearest, since you are married to him.

Mrs. Pinch. O wou'd you make me believe that—— don't I see every day at *London* here, women leave their first husbands, and go and live with other men as their wives? pish, pshaw, you'd make me angry, but that I love you so mainly.

Horn. So, they are coming up——in again, in, I hear 'em:

(Exit Mrs. Pinchwife.

Well, a silly mistress is like a weak place, soon got, soon
lost

lost, a man has scarce time for plunder; she betray^s her husband first to her gallant, and then her gallant to her husband.

Enter Pinchwife, Alithea, Harcourt, Sparkish, Lucy, and a Parson.

Mr. Pinch. Come, madam, 'tis not the sudden change of your dress, the confidence of your asseverations, and your false witness there, shall persuade me I did not bring you hither just now; here's my witness, who cannot deny it, since you must be confronted—*Mr. Horner*, did not I bring this lady to you just now?

Horn. Now must I wrong one woman for another's sake; but that's no new thing with me, for in these cases I am still on the criminal's side, against the innocent. *(Aside.)*

Alitb. Pray speak, sir.

Horn. It must be so—I must be impudent, and try my luck; impudence uses to be too hard for truth. *(Aside.)*

Mr. Pinch. What, you are studying an evasion, or excuse for her; speak, sir.

Horn. No, faith, I am something backward only to speak in womens affairs or disputes.

Mr. Pinch. She bids you speak.

Alitb. Ay, pray sir, do, pray satisfy him.

Horn. Then, truly, you did bring that lady to me just now.

Mr. Pinch. O ho —

Alitb. How, sir—

Harc. How, *Horner*!

Alitb. What mean you, sir? I always took you for a man of honour.

Horn. Ay, so much a man of honour, that I must save my mistress, I thank you, come what will on't. *(Aside.)*

Spark. So if I had had her, she'd have made me believe the moon had been mad of a *Christmas* pye.

Lucy. Now cou'd I speak, if I durst, and solve the riddle, who am the author of it. *(Aside.)*

Alitb. O unfortunate woman! a combination against my honour, which most concerns me now, because you share in my disgrace, sir; and 'tis your censure, which I must now suffer, that troubles me, not theirs.

Harc. Madam, then have no trouble; you shall now

I see 'tis possible for me to love too, without being jealous; I will not only believe your innocence my self, but make all the world believe it——

Horner, I must now be concerned for this lady's honour.

(Apart to Horner.

Horn. And I must be concern'd for a lady's honour too.

Harc. This lady has her honour, and I will protect it.

Horn. My lady has not her honour, but has given it me to keep, and I will preserve it.

Harc. I understand you not.

Horn. I wou'd not have you.

Mrs. Pinch. What's the matter with 'em all?

(Mrs. Pinchwife peeping in behind.

Mr. Pinch. Come, come, *Mr. Horner*, no more disputing, here's the parson, I brought him not in vain.

Horn. No, sir, I'll employ him, if this lady please.

Mr. Pinch. How, what d'ye mean?

Spark. Ay, what does he mean?

Horn. Why, I have resign'd your sister to him, he has my consent.

Mr. Pinch. But he has not mine, sir: a woman's injur'd honour, no more than a man's, can be repair'd, or satisfy'd by any, but him that first wrong'd it; and you shall marry her presently, or——

(Lays his hand on his sword.

Enter to them Mrs. Pinchwife.

Mrs. Pinch. O lord, they'll kill poor *Mr. Horner*: besides, he shan't marry her, whilst I stand by, and look on; I'll not lose my second husband so.

Mr. Pinch. What do I see?

Alith. My sister in my cloaths!

Spark. Ha!

Mrs. Pinch. Nay, pray now don't quarrel about finding work for the parson; he shall marry me to *Mr. Horner*; for now, I believe, you have enough of me.

(To Mr. Pinchwife.

Horn. Damn'd, damn'd loving changeling.

Mrs. Pinch. Pray, sister, pardon me for telling so many lyes of you.

Harc. I suppose the riddle is plain now.

Lucy. No, that must be my work, good sir, hear me.

(Kneels to Mr. Pinchwife who stands doggedly, with his hat over his Eyes.

Mr. Pinch.

Mr. Pinch. I will never hear woman again, but make 'em all silent thus—— (Offers to draw upon his wife.

Horn. No, that must not be.

Mr. Pinch. You then shall go first, 'tis all one to me.
(Offers to draw on Horn. stop'd by Harc.

Harc. Hold——

Enter Sir Jasper Fidget, Lady Squeamish, Mrs. Dainty Fidget, Mrs. Squeamish.

Sir Jasp. What's the matter? what's the matter, pray, what's the matter, fir? I beseech you communicate, fir.

Mr. Pinch. Why, my wife has communicated, fir, as your wife may have done too, fir, if she knows him, fir——

Sir Jasp. Pshaw, with him, ha, ha, he!

Mr. Pinch. D'ye mock me, fir; a cuckold is a king of a wild beast, have a care, fir——

Sir Jasp. No, sure, you mock me,— he cuckold you! it can't be, ha, ha, he: why, I'll tell you, fir.

(Offers to whisper.

Mr. Pinch. I tell you again, he has whor'd my wife, and yours too, if he knows her, and all the women he comes near; 'tis not his dissembling, his hypocrisy, can wheedle me.

Sir Jasp. How! does he dissemble? is he a hypocrite? nay then—how—wife—sister, is he a hypocrite?

O. L. Squeam. A hypocrite, a dissembler! speak young harlotry, speak, how?

Sir Jasp. Nay, then—O my head too—O thou libidinous lady!

O. L. Squeam. O thou harloting harlotry, hast thou done't then?

Sir Jasp. Speak, good Horner, art thou a dissembler, a rogue? hast thou——

Horn. So——

Lucy. I'll fetch you off, and her too, if she will not hold her tongue.

(Apart to Horner.

Horn. Canst thou? I'll give thee—— (Apart to Lucy.

Lucy to Mr. Pinch.) Pray have but patience to hear me, fir, who am the unfortunate cause of all this confusion: your wife is innocent, I only culpable; for I put her upon telling you all these lyes concerning my mistress,
in

in order to the breaking off the match between Mr. *Sparkish* and her, to make way for Mr. *Harcourt*.

Spark. Did you so, eternal rotten-tooth? then it seems my mistress was not false to me, I was only deceived by your brother, that shou'd have been, now man of conduct, who is a frank person now, to bring your wife to her lover — ha —

Lucy. I assure you, sir, she came not to Mr. *Horner* out of love, for she loves him no more —

Mrs. Pinch. Hold, I told lyes for you, but you shall tell none for me; for I do love Mr. *Horner* with all my soul, and no body shall say me nay: pray, don't you go to make poor *Horner* believe to the contrary, 'tis spitefully done of you, I'm sure.

Horn. Peace, dear idiot. (*Aside to Mrs. Pinchwife.*)

Mrs. Pinch. Nay, I will not peace.

Mr. Pinch. Not till I make you.

Enter Dorilant, Quack.

Dor. Horner, your servant, I'm the doctor's guest, he must excuse our intrusion.

Quack. But what's the matter, gentlemen? for heaven's sake, what's the matter?

Horn. Oh, 'tis well you are come — 'tis a censorious world we live in; you may have brought me a reprimand, or else I had died for a crime I never committed, and these innocent ladies had suffer'd with me; therefore pray satisfy these worthy, honourable, jealous gentlemen that — that — (*Whispers.*)

Quack. O, I understand you, is that all — sir *Jasper*, by heavens, and upon the word of a physician, sir —

(*Whispers to Sir Jasper.*)

Sir Jasp. Nay, I do believe you truly — pardon me, my virtuous lady, and dear of honour.

O. L. Squeam. What, then all's right again.

Sir Jasp. Ay, ay, and now let us satisfy him too.

(*They whisper with Mr. Pinchwife.*)

Mr. Pinch. An eunuch! pray, no fooling with me.

Quack. I'll bring half the chirurgeons in town to swear it.

Mr. Pinch. They—they'll swear a man that bled to death through his wounds died of an apoplexy.

Quack. Pray, hear me, sir — why all the town has heard the report of him.

Mr. Pinch.

Mr. Pinch. But does all the town believe it?

Quack. Pray, enquire a little, and first of all these.

Mr. Pinch. I'm sure, when I left the town, he was the leudest fellow in't.

Quack. I tell you, fir, he has been in France since: pray ask but these ladies and gentlemen, your friend Mr. Dorilant: gentlemen and ladies, han't you all heard the late sad report of poor Mr. Horner?

All Lad. Ay, ay, ay.

Dor. Why, thou jealous fool, dost thou doubt it? he's an errant French capon.

Mrs. Pinch. 'Tis false, fir, you shall not disparage poor Mr. Horner, for to my certain knowledge—

Lucy. O, hold—

Squeam. Stop her mouth—

(Aside to Lucy.

Lady Fidg. Upon my honour, fir, 'tis as true.

(To Pinch.

Daint. D'ye think he won'd have been seen in his company—

Squeam. Trust our unspotted reputations with him!

Lady Fidg. This you get, and we too, by trusting your secret to a fool—

(Aside to Horner.

Horn. Peace, madam — well, doctor, is not this a good design that carries a man on unsuspected, and brings him off safe?—

(Aside to Quack.

Mr. Pinch. Well, if this were true, but my wife—

(Aside.

(Dorilant whispers with Mrs. Pinchwife.

Alib. Come, brother, your wife is yet innocent you see; but have a care of too strong an imagination, lest like an over concern'd timorous gamester, by fancying an unlucky cast, it shou'd come: women and fortune are truest still to those that trust 'em.

Lucy. And any wild thing grows but the more fierce and hungry for being kept up, and more dangerous to the keeper.

Alib. There's doctrine for all husbands, Mr. Haycourt!

Harc. I edify, madam, so much, that I am impatient till I am one.

Dor. And I edify so much my example, I will never be one.

Spark. And because I will not disparage my parts, I'll ne'er be one.

Horn.

Horn. And I, alas! can't be one.

Mr. Pinch. But I must be one—against my will to a country wife, with a country murrain to me.

Mrs. Pinch. And I must be a country wife still too, I find; for I can't, like a city one, be rid of a musty husband, and do what I list. *(Aside.*

Horn. Now, sir, I must pronounce your wife innocent, though I blush whilst I do it, and I am the only man by her now expos'd to shame, which I will straight drown in wine, as you shall your suspicion; and the ladies troubles we'll divert with a ballad: doctor, where are your maskers?

Lucy. Indeed, she's innocent, sir, I am her witness, and her end of coming out was but to see her sister's wedding; and what she has said to your face of her love to Mr. *Horner*, was but the usual innocent revenge on a husband's jealousy, was it not, madam? speak—

Mrs. Pinch. Since you'll have me tell more lies—
(Aside to Lucy and Horner

Yes, indeed, bud.

Mr. Pinch. For my own sake fain I wou'd all believe:

Cuckolds like lovers shou'd themselves deceive,

But—

(Sighs.

His honour is least safe (too late I find)

Who trust it with a foolish wife or friend.

A dance of cuckolds.

Horn. Vain fops but court, and dress, and keep a pother,

To pass for womens men, with one another:

But he who aims by women to be priz'd,

First by the men, you see, must be despis'd.

F I N I S.

